THE WAY OF THE SPIRIT In bringing SOULS TO CHRIST.

Set forth in

X. SERMONS,

ON

JOHN 16. 7, 8, 9, 10.

And CHAP. 7. 37.

By that able and faithful Servant of Jesus Christ, Mr. *Thomas Allen*, late Pastor of a Church in the City of *Norwich*.

see Palmer Vol. II p. 200

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CHRIST.

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A431

SERMONS.

Having a ſight of theſe Sermons before they went to the preſs, I thought fit to ſpeak ſomething of them, and ſomething of the Author.

1. *As to theſe* Sermons, *The deſign of them is excellent. Firſt, they ſhew that the Holy Ghoſt in bringing Souls to Chriſt, doth firſt convince them of ſin, ſo making them to feel their need of Chriſt, working in them to hunger and thirſt after him, prize him above all, and count all things loſs and dung in compariſon of him. Secondly, In theſe* Sermons *is excellently ſet forth the fulneſs and righteouſneſs of the* Lord Jeſus, *whereby he is able to ſave to the uttermoſt all that come unto God by him. Thirdly, here is ſet forth how freely* Chriſt *admits ſinners to come unto him that they may have life, not ſtanding upon any merit or worthineſs in us, but only works our hearts to a ſenſe of our own vileneſs and unworthineſs, and by a ſecret work of his Spirit draws the humbled and convinced ſinner to take of the water of life freely.*

Poſſibly ſome may meet with a few paſſages in ſome of theſe Sermons, *that they may not clearly underſtand, Let ſuch conſider that theſe Notes were neither intended nor prepared by the Author for the Preſs, but taken in ſhort hand from the mouth of the Preacher, in*

which case there must be great allowance. Likewise some may think the Author did inculcate things too much, and was not so concise and sententious as were to be desired. In answer to that, I would say, that in my poor judgment I always looked upon it as one of the many excellent gifts of God bestowed upon him, that he had a great dexterity in clearing and urging things with variety of expressions. As he was a heart Christian, so he was a heart Preacher, and those things that are to be wrought upon the hearts of the hearers are to be sufficientey cleared to their understandings, and earnestly set home to their Souls and Consciences, though God can set in with a short hint to convert a soul, and enlarge that with great light and power upon the hearer, that was not sufficiently cleared and urged by the Preacher, yet truly 'tis an excellence in a Preacher to set forth the truths of God plainly and fully with power and authority in the name of Christ.

2. *As to the Author of these Sermons, that burning and shining light* Mr. Thomas Allen *(now with Christ) I must needs say something (having such an opportunity) of the exceeding grace of God in him.*

1. *I will speak of him as a Christian. He was one that obtained mercy to fear the Lord*

from

from his youth, and soon grew up to such a measure of grace as to be one of the highest form in Christs school, he attained to be more than one of the children or young men in Christ, even to be one of the Fathers, one of the most grown and most experienced Christians, full of Faith, and of the Holy Ghost. His heart was much awed with a holy reverence of God, he was a man of a tender conscience, fearful to offend God, Christ was exceeding precious to him, he made him all his salvation, and all his desire, he was full of holy zeal, valiant for the Truth, he had a heart for God, and a tongue for God upon all occasions. In communicating to others necessities he was so free, that usually he did beyond his estate, he was every way eminent in grace, adorning the Gospel with a holy & fruitful conversaion.

2. As a Minister, *he was very able and faithful, he was an excellent Preacher, plain and powerful in his doctrine, and though he was a learned man, yet he preached without all ostentation, he did not confound his hearers with obscure terms and fantastical expressions, but endeavoured to set forth the Truths of God in the most plain and convincing way to the consciences of men. He preached not himself, but Christ, he was not desirous of vain glory. In his preaching he was not in jest, playing with his Text and with the souls of men (as*

the manner of some is) but was in sober sadness and good earnest to bring souls to Christ, and build them up in him. He was eminent in self-denial, he made not the Ministry a trade to get mony, his design was not to make himself rich in the World, but to make others rich in grace. In those places in which he laboured he might say with the Apostle that he sought not theirs, *but* them, *not their* goods, *but their* good. *It's no dishonour to a Minister of Christ to live of a little, and to leave but little when he dyes: Proud, lordly, self seeking, high living Ministers no way suit the Gospel of Christ; (which was first preached by a company of poor men, without any worldly splendor, who went through wonderful hardships and difficulties in fulfilling the Ministry which they received of the Lord Jesus,* 2 Cor. 6. 4, 5. 2 Cor. 11, 23, 24, &c.) *but are rather like the Merchants of* Babylon, *who grow rich and great with the abundance of her delicacies,* Rev. 18. 3. 11. 12.

Another thing that I would mention of this worthy man was his marvellous condescension in private discourses to his brethren in the Ministry, who were much inferiour to him in age and gifts, not standing upon his own great worth, never exalting himself, but preferring them above himself, hearing their judgments in any matter with as great reverence and respect

respect as if they had been his Superiors. Surely his humility was extraordinary, and a notable example to all that knew him.

As he was a Scribe instructed to the Kingdom of God in all points of the Doctrine of Religion, so he was expert in all Questions about Church-discipline above many; for which he had been much advantaged by living so long in New-England, *and having there such intimate acquaintance with those famous men* Mr. Bulkly, Mr. Hooker, Mr. Cotton, Mr. Shephard, *and others there, who lived in his heart when they were dead, and he delighted to speak, and to relate some remarkable passages of them.*

One thing more I would take notice of in this man of God, he was full of compassion to those that were under violent temptations, and terrors of Conscience, and very judicious to direct them in the way to find rest unto their souls.

Whilst I commend this Servant of Jesus Christ, let none be offended, as if I thought or spake of man above what is meet, I know indeed there is in these days a kind of man-worship, a crying up this man and the other, and having their persons and preaching in admiration without cause, when in the mean while who almost cryeth up the Lord Jesus, and maketh

maketh him all in all? Therefore let me be so understood in all that I have said, that I mention these excellencies of this Servant of God not to cry up a piece of clay, but for the glory of Christ, who put all this treasure into an earthen vessel, and to quicken us that are alive and remain to follow such an holy example and pattern as Christ hath shewn us in his grace bestowed upon him.

To conclude, when we have considered the graces and excellencies of the Servants of Christ, we should turn our eyes presently to Christ himself to admire him, and prayse him. He came from above, and is above all, greater than all both men and Angels, he hath a name above every name. The best Ministers must decrease, go off the stage, and ly in the dust: but he must increase, and be yet more glorious in the eyes of Angels and men. The best Ministers are but under shepherds to that good, great, chief Shepherd, and Bishop of our souls. It is he that brings the many sons to glory, he is the one Mediator, Saviour, Redeemer, and Head of the Church. Ministers are but Stewards to this high Lord and King, Labourers for this Lord of the harvest, Under-rowers to Christ the Master Pilot of the Ship of the Church. Blessed are those Servants that are faithful to him our high and most excellent Lord Jesus, our good Lord and Master, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Martin Fynch.

Grimsby, August 26, 1674.

Christ doth all for the Best.

SERMON I.

JOHN 16. 7, 8, 9, 10.

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

And when he is come, he will reprove the world of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of Judgment.

Of Sin, because they believe not on me.

Of Righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.

OUr Lord Jesus Christ is now about to leave the World and to go from his Disciples and Servants; he doth indeavour before his Departure to strengthen and establish their hearts both against

those sufferings they were like to meet withal, and also against that sorrow that now their hearts were filled withall upon the hearing of his departing and going away from them.

As for their sufferings you have that spoken to inthe first 4 verses, wherein he gives them a Reason why he speaks to them concerning their Sufferings. Saith he, *These things have I spoken unto you, that you might not be offended.* I tell you before hand of your Sufferings, that you may not be offended. What's that? Namely, that you may not be so stumbled when you meet with Sufferings more than you did expect, and so be ready to turn your backs upon the Gospel, upon your Profession. *These things have I spoken unto you*; He had been speaking in the last verse of the former Chapter, of their meeting with *Tribulation in the the world*; And, saith Christ, *These things have I spoken unto you before-hand, that when they come you might not stumble and go back.*

You see, Brethren, how tender Jesus Christ is of his Disciples and Servants, he would not have them to be offended, and therefore he tells them before-hand of their Sufferings, and that is the way to prevent Offences, and Stumblings, and fallings back from our Profession by our Persecutions and Sufferings, to understand and know before-hand what we are like to meet withall; and therefore, saith Christ, I tell you of these things before, that when they come to pass, you may not be offended. And then he tells them more particularly what Sufferings they are like to meet withall. And, saith he, You are like to meet with the highest and greatest kind of Sufferings, Sufferings

of

of the higheſt nature both from the Eccleſiaſtical and Civil State, the higheſt kind of Sufferings they poſſibly can inflict upon you, for, ſaith he, *You ſhall be brought into their Eccleſiaſtical Courts, they ſhall Excommunicate and caſt you out of their Synagogues*, and not only ſo, but you *ſhall have the Cenſure of their Civil Courts*, you ſhall have ſentence of death paſſed upon you, they ſhall put you to death, and think they do God good ſervice in ſo doing. Theſe things, ſaith he, you muſt look for.

And by the way, take notice of this, That Chriſt and his Servants are expoſed to the greateſt wrath, malice, indignation and hatred that this world can exerciſe on them. The higheſt kinds of evil and puniſhment that this world can inflict upon them are all little enough; and then he gives the reaſon of it, why they ſhall thus inflict ſuch puniſhments on them, and put them to ſuch ſufferings, *Verſe* 3. *Theſe things will they do, becauſe they have not known the Father nor me*; It is from their ignorance of God and Chriſt. And truly ſo all Perſecutors, what they do againſt the Saints and People of God, it is from their ignorance of Chriſt; for did they know God and Chriſt, they would not ſo perſecute the Saints and Servants of Chriſt; but theſe things will they do, becauſe they have not known the Father nor me.

But then the Diſciples might ask Chriſt, Why did he not ſpeak of theſe things before, and tell them what ſufferings they were like to meet with? To that Chriſt anſwers them, *Verſe* 4. *I ſaid not theſe things to you at the beginning, becauſe I was with you.* They were not then ſo liable to Sufferings the time Chriſt was with them, all

their hatred and malice was then let out against Christ himself, as long as Christ was personally present; so the Disciples were free, Christ preserved them: but now (saith he) I go away, now you shall be exposed to all these things, and now I tell you of them, that you may be prepared, strengthened and fortified against them.

But as then for their sorrow about his going away, he tells them of his going away from them, that they should be deprived of his personal presence, from *verse* 5. and so on; but now I go my way to him that sent me. And now Christ doth in a very gentle manner blame his Disciples that they did not enquire into the end and reason of his going away, *I go my way to him that sent me, and none of you ask me, Whither goest thou?* If they had but enquired whither Christ was to go, and to what end he was to go away from them, their hearts would not have been so full of sorrow, if they had understood whither he was going, namely that he was going to the Father; he was going to Heaven to be glorified there, and exalted there, to sit at the right hand of God there, to have all power given into his own hand, to have power over all Creatures and things; *None of you ask me, Whither goest thou?* Had they enquired after that, had they understood that, they would not have been so full of sorrow.

Objection.

But you will say, Did not some of the Disciples ask him before, whither he went. *John* 13. 36. *Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou?*

Jesus

Jesus answered, *Whither I go you cannot follow me now, but you shall follow me hereafter* —— *Lord*, saith he, *why cannot I follow thee now* —? Why then doth Christ say here, none of you ask me whither goest thou? when *Peter* expressly asked the Question before.

Answer.

To this I answer, *The Question that* Peter *put to Christ whither he went, was not so much to understand his Exaltation and Glory, and the End of his going away, as out of prefidence of his own strength and ability to follow Christ*: but now Christs meaning is, when he saith, *None of you ask me whither goest thou*? that is, you do not understand the end of my going away from you, you do not know wherefore I go to my Father, and therefore Sorrow hath filled your hearts; and then he blames them for being so sad and sorrowful for his going away, *Verse 6. Because I said these things to you, Sorrow hath filled your hearts*; if they had known that Christ was now going to the Father to be exalted at the right hand of God, they would not have been so sorrowful: no saith Christ, *John* 14. 28. *If ye had loved me, ye would have rejoyced, because I said I go to the Father; for my Father is greater than I.* Now observe and take notice of this, *That it is displeasing unto Christ to see any of his Disciples and Servants to be immoderately sorrowfull upon any account*; though it was upon the account of his departing from them and their losing his Presence, yet notwithstanding Christ would not have them immoderately sorrowful, he blames them for it, and now sayes he, *because I said these things, to you,*

Sorrow hath filled your hearts. And further, he comes to lay down some Comforts and Antidotes against their Sorrow here in the Text, the *7th* verse, wherein by way of Comfort he tells them,

1. That it was expedient for them that he should go away, *It is expedient for you*; not only expedient for me that I go to the Father to be exalted in Heaven, *but it is expedient for you also*, saith Christ, *Expedient for you*; That is one Ground of Comfort to allay their Sorrow. And not only so, But

2. *He doth assert it and affirm it very confidently, he would have them fully perswaded of it*; Because it was hard for them to believe that Christ should leave them and go away from them, that they should be deprived of his personal presence; was there any thing harder for them to grapple with than that? could there be any thing more expedient for them than that he should stay with them? but saith Christ, *I tell you the Truth, it is expedient for you that I go away*, You may be confident and perswaded of it, *nevertheless I tell you the Truth.* And.

3. He doth further amplify this Comfort about his going away, by telling of them, *What Benefit they would have by his going from them*, Therefore that may sustain and support their Hearts and Spirits. Why? what shall they get by it? saith Christ, you shall have something that shall be equivalent to my bodily presence, you shall have that that is more expedient for you; you shall have the presence of the Comforter the Holy Ghost, and this he doth express both negatively and affirmatively, *If I go not away the Comforter will*

will not come to you, but if I depart I will send him unto you: You shall be sure to have the Comforter if I go away; when I come to sit at the right hand of my Father, I will send the Comforter; and you cannot have the Comforter so fully now my presence is with you as you shall have after I am ascended up to Heaven to be glorified. And

4. He doth more particularly set out the Benefits they shall have by the presence of the Comforter, and amongst other things he saith the Comforter shall be with them to give them success in their Ministry, shall make their Ministry effectual and powerful for to convince, *To convince the World of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment.*

Thus you see the Scope of these Words, they are spoken by Christ by way of Comfort to his Disciples, whose hearts were filled with Sorrow at the hearing of his going away from them. *Nevertheless I tell you the Truth, it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come, but if I depart I will send him unto you; and when he is come, he shall reprove the World of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment.*

I have formerly (as you may remember) spoken concerning the glorious effects of the Gospel from that Scripture *Acts* 26. 18. Now here you have laid down the Cause whereby the Gospel came to be so efficacious, and effectual, namely, by the presence of the Comforter, by the assistance of the Holy Ghost with the Ministry of it.

You may observe and take notice of it, That after Christs Ascension into Heaven, immediately their Ministry was more powerfull and more effectual in one Sermon, than it was in all the time they were with Christ in his bodily presence, three thousand at one Clap were brought in by one Sermon, so powerful was the Holy Ghost with them in their Ministry. But briefly then, before I come to speak to the eighth Verse (which principally I aimed at in pitching upon this Scripture) I shall take up one Note or Observation, which may be of Use and Concernment to us, from the *7th verse*; and that is this,

Doct. *That it is a most certain Truth that it is expedient for the Disciples and Servants of Christ sometimes to be deprived of the neerest and dearest Comforts that they have in this World.*

Brethren, the Presence of Christ was the neerest and deerest Comfort that they had in this World, yet saith Christ, *It is expedient for you that I go away from you, and that you be deprived of my bodily Presence*; and because it was a hard thing for them to believe; what? to be deprived of his Presence that was so dear to them: therefore he adds this, *I tell you the Truth*; it is true what I say, it is no Lye. *Nevertheless, I tell you the Truth, it is expedient for you that I go away.* It was expedient that Christ should go away, and lay down his Life, that he should rise again from the dead, and ascend into Heaven, and sit on the right hand of God, and have all Power and Glory

put into his hand, and therefore it was expedient for them, that they might enjoy all the Fruits of his Death, and Resurrection, and Ascension, and Glorification, and Exaltation; it was expedient for them in all these respects, but more particularly that they might have the Holy Ghost sent down to them.

Me-thinks, Brethren, Jesus Christ here comes to his Disciples and speaks to them as a tender-hearted Husband to his dear Wife, when he is about to undertake some great Journey, or some Voyage, to go away from her, she is mourning and weeping, he comes and speaks comfortably to her, and perswades her to be of good chear, as if he should say, *My Deare, there is no Remedy, I must go away, I must take this Journey, there is no help for it, 'tis necessary, 'tis expedient, nay, and 'tis for thy sake, it is to fetch in Comforts for thee, and necessaries for thee; it is expedient not only for me to finish my Business because my occasions and business call me abroad, but it is expedient for thee that I take this Voyage or Journey, 'tis for your Comfort; and be assured of it, that I will send to you ere long, thou shalt hear from me ere long, I will send One on purpose to comfort thee and refresh thee in my absence; and know this that I will not stay always from you, but will come in a short time again.* Thus Jesus Christ spake to his Disciples, when he was about to leave them, saith he, My occasions call me to go away from you, and not only so, but it is expedient for you, it is for your Benefit and Advantage, and though I be personally absent from you, yet I will send one unto you

that

that shall supply my absence, even the Comforter, and after a little short time I will come again to you, I will not stay long from you; so he saith afterwards, *Verse 16. A little while and you shall not see me, and a little while and you shall see me, because I go to the Father.* And *Verse 22. Therefore now have you Sorrow; but I will see you again, and your hearts shall rejoyce*: Within a little while I will come to you, I will make all the haste I can to you. Thus Christ speaks to his Disciples and Servants to comfort their Hearts, being sorrowfull upon his going away.

1 Brethren, Was there any thing, or could there be any thing that was nearer or dearer to the hearts of the Disciples than the presence of Christ? The presence of Jesus Christ was more to them than any Comforts of this World, more to them than their Estates and Callings, and Gain, and Trade, for you know they left their Ships and their Nets and Callings and all to follow Christ; nay Christ was more near and dear to them than their neareſt Relations that they had in the World, for 'tis said, they left not only their Callings, their Trades and Ships and Nets, but they left their Fathers and away they went after Christ, yea they left all that ever they had, as *Peter* himself saith, *Matthew 19. 27, 28, 29.* saith he, *We have left all to follow thee*; Not only their Callings, their Trade and Gains, not only their Parents and Relations, *But we have left All to follow thee*; Yea, Brethren, Jesus Christ was more dear

dear and precious to them than their very lives, for you know what Christ was speaking to them about his going away, *Mat.* 26. and telling them that some of them would deny him, saith *Peter*, *Though I dy with thee, I will not deny thee*; saith he, I will dy first, I will lose my life first, and 'tis said all of them said after the like manner; they loved Christ more than their very lives, and yet now you see what Christ said to them, though his Presence was so near and dear unto them, yet saith Christ, I tell you the Truth it is expedient for you that I go away, it is expedient for you that I leave you, though I be so near and dear unto you. So that here is the Point grounded upon these Words; That it is a most certain Truth, *That it is expedient for the Disciples and Servants of Christ sometimes to be deprived of those Comforts that seem to be neareſt and deareſt to them in this World*, it is expedient for them—: *The Word that is here translated expedient, it signifieth most profitable, more profitable for you, or better for you*; better for you that I go away, than that I stay with you; more Profitable for you, so the Word is sometimes translated, and so it properly signifieth, expedient, that is, profitable: so saith the Apostle, 1 *Corinthians* 6. 12. *All things are lawfull for me, but all things are not expedient.* The Word is *profitable*, so it is in the Margin, *All things are not profitable.* So *Chap.* 10. in the last *Verse*, saith the Apostle, *Even as I please all Men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many that they may be saved,*

it

it is the same word, only tis there translated *profit*, or *profitable*; 'tis expedient or profitable for you that I go away; and sometimes 'tis translated *good* or *better*, so *Luke* 17. 2, 3. Saith Christ, *It were better for him that a Mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the Sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones*; The word is, *expedient*. So again, *Mat.* 5. 29, 30. Saith Christ, *'Tis better for you to go into Life maimed, with one Eye, or one Hand, than having both your Eyes and hands, to go into Hell.* 'Tis *better*, the word is, *expedient*. So that here is the meaning of it; *It is expedient for you that I go away*, that is, *'tis most profitable for you*, 'tis *better for you* that I go away from you, than that you do enjoy my personal presence.

Now for the opening and handling of this Point and Truth, I shall briefly speak to these three things.

1. Give you the Demonstrations of it, by some particular Instances, *That it is most expedient or profitable sometimes for the Servants of Christ to be deprived of their neareſt and deareſt Comforts that they do enjoy.* In which I shall give you some particulars.

2. I shall shew the Ground why, or whereupon *It is so expedient or profitable for them to be deprived of their deareſt and neareſt Comforts they can enjoy in this World.*

3. And then shew you this, *That to enjoy the presence of the Comforter, the Spirit of God, is more expedient for the Saints in this World, than to enjoy the personal presence of Christ.*

I shall

I shall not be able to go through this Point at this time; but for the

1. To give you some Demonstrations by some particular Instances, *That it is expedient for the Servants of Christ sometimes to be deprived of their neerest and dearest Comforts that they have in this World.*

I shall Instance now in some particulars. As,

1. *It may be expedient for the Servants of Christ sometimes to be deprived of their outward Estates in the World.* Brethren, to have a competent measure of Estate in the World is a comfortable thing; Those that have great Estates, do not know and understand the temptations of a poor estate; therefore, saith the holy man *Agur*, *Pro.*30.9. though he would not be rich, yet, *Lord give me not poverty.* It is a great mercy to be comfortably provided for in the World, yet for all that it is most expedient sometimes for the servants of Christ to be deprived of their outward Estates in the world. You know how it was with *Job*, it is said, *He was the richest man in all the East; he had seven thousand Sheep, three thousand Camels, a thousand yoke of Oxen, five hundred she-Asses*, Job 10.3. yet it was expedient for *Job* to be deprived of all this Estate, all was taken from him suddenly, and it was expedient for him thus to be deprived. If his Cattel could have spoke they would have said, as Christ to his Disciples here; his Sheep would have said, *It is expedient for you, that we go away from you*; his Oxen, his Camels and his Asses, all would have said, *It is expedient for you, for us to go away from you.* We read, *Heb.* 10.34. That the Christians in those dayes were plundred of their Estates

Estates in this World, and it was expedient for them, because *God hath provided a better and more enduring substance for them.* And therefore mark the expression of the Apostle *James*, 1. 10. *Let the Brother of low degree rejoyce in that he is exalted; but the rich in that he is made low*, because 'tis expedient for him. That is one thing.

2. Let us instance in *Outward Accommodations.* As now, to be comfortably provided for in respect of Clothing, and in respect of an Habitation, and Dwelling-place. Brethren, these are great Comforts, to be left naked in the time of the Cold, to be without Clothing is a great Suffering, to be left without a House and Habitation, to be driven by Enemies from our Houses and Habitations, to be forced to flee up and down into the naked fields, 'tis a great Affliction: but it is a great Comfort and Blessing to be well provided for for Clothing and Habitation; I do not speak in regard of gorgeous Apparrel, but for necessary and convenient Clothing; *Let thy Garments be always white*, saith *Solomon*; handsome Clothing, cleanly Clothing, is a great mercy and comfort. Yet now sometimes, it is expedient for the servants of Christ to be deprived of their Clothing, to be put to their shifts to get any raggs to cover their nakedness; you shall read, *Heb.* 11. 37. how those *Worthies, of whom the World was not worthy, they wandred up and down in Sheep-skins and Goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted and tormented*; They were deprived of their Clothing, they could take up a skin that they found in the Wilderness, and were glad to make use of it to cover their Bodies; they were covered with Sheep-skins and Goat-skins. So for a Habitation

bitation, it is a comfortable thing to have a comfortable Habitation and Dwelling-place, to shelter them from the Weather; and therefore 'tis made as a gracious promise, *Hosea* 11. 11. *That God's People shall dwell in their own Houses.* I tell you, if so be we had an enemy to come and drive us out of our Houses and take possession of our Habitations, whilst we escape with our Lives, it would be a great affliction; but yet for all that, sometimes it is most expedient for the Lords Servants to be deprived of their Habitations. Look into *Heb.* 11. 38. You read of those, of *whom the World was not worthy, That they wandred in Deserts, and Mountains, and Dens, and Caves of the Earth*; they had no Houses at all, that if they could find out a little hole in the Wilderness and Desart, if they could find out a Cave, they would be glad to hide their heads there; the Lord saw it expedient for them that their Houses and Habitations, and also their outward accommodations in regard of Cloathing, should be taken from them.

3. To instance *in our Liberties.* Liberty, Brethren is a great blessing, it is a great mercy to have Liberty, that we are not in Enemies hands, that we are not clapt up in close Prisons, that we are not in Chains; and those that have had experience, what it is to be deprived of their Liberty, that have been clapt up in Prison, they are better able to judge of it than we are, what a Mercy Liberty is; those that are now in Prison for their Consciences, would prize their Liberty if they might injoy it. Well, but yet for all this, that Liberty is such a great mercy and blessing, yet sometimes it

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is most expedient for the servants of Christ to be deprived of their Liberty; 'Tis expedient for them that their Liberty go away; you know what Christ spake unto *Peter*, *John* 21. 18. *When thou was't young thou girdedst thy self, and wentest whither thou wouldest*, thou hadst thy Liberty: *but verily, I say unto thee, When thou shalt be old thou shalt stretch forth thy hand and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not*. It was expedient for *Peter* to have his Liberty taken from him. *Paul* that eminent Apostle and Servant of Christ, that was so usefull in his place and generation, yet it was expedient for *Paul* himself to be deprived of his Liberty; and therefore, if you observe it, the most of all his Epistles were written by him when he was in Prison; *Paul a Prisoner of Jesus Christ*; and if you look into the latter end of the *Acts*, he was there two years together in Prison at *Rome*, though indeed he had a little more Liberty than some others now adays may have, he had a hired house for himself, he had a Keeper with him and a chain upon him, he could not go whither he would. And so it hath been the Lot and Portion of the precious Saints and Servants of Christ in those Primitive times to be deprived of their Liberty, as the Apostle speaks, *Hebrews* 11. 36. *They suffered reproaches and also imprisonment*, so that it is expedient for the Servants of Christ sometimes to be deprived of their Liberty.

Fourthly

4. *To inſtance in our Health and Strength*, which is a great bleſſing; they that are ſick and continually exerciſed with weakneſſes, pains, aches and diſtempers; theſe can tell you, that health and ſtrength is a pretious mercy; When the Lord lays his Hand upon us but a little while, Eaſe is a great mercy, and Health and Strength is a great mercy, and ſo it is; but yet ſometimes it is expedient for the Servants of Chriſt to be deprived of their Health and Strength, that their Health and Strength go from them; you find it by frequent experience how the Saints and Servants of God have been deprived of their Health and Strength, and commonly many that are moſt eminent, they are exerciſed with Weakneſſes and Sickneſſes of Body. I remember the Apoſtle ſpeaks concerning *Timothy*, he was a young man, and yet for all that he had many infirmities, therefore he adviſes him, 1 *Tim.* 5. 23. *To drink no longer water, but a little wine, for his many and often infirmities.* He had many and frequent infirmities of Body upon him, that it was expedient for him that his Health and Strength were taken away from him. I remember the *Pſalmiſt* hath a paſſage in *Pſal.* 73. the beginning, ſaith he, ſpeaking of the wicked, *Verſe* 4. *There is no bands in their Death, their Strength is firm, they are not in trouble as other men*; They have their Strength, and Health, and Liberty, and *their Bones are full of Marrow, and their Eyes ſtand out with fatneſs, and they have more than heart can wiſh.*— But, ſaith he, *As for me, I have infirmities upon me, I am chaſtiſed every Morning*, as duly as the Sun riſes, *every day, and all the day long I am afflicted.* Brethren the Lord ſees that it is expedi-

dient sometimes that his Servants should be deprived of their Health and Strength.

5. To give another Instance, *To instance in near Relations*, as to enjoy the comfort of Yoke-fellows, to enjoy the comforts of Children, Christian-friends and acquaintance, these are great Comforts and great Blessings. As I remember the *Psalmist* speaks, *Psal.* 128. 3, 4. He is speaking what a mercy and blessing it is to enjoy Children, *Thy Children shall be like Olive Plants round about thy Table; and thus shall the Man be blessed that feareth the Lord.* And saith *Solomon*, *Eccles.* 9. 9. *Live joyfully with the Wife whom thou lovest, all the days of the life of thy vanity.* These things are great Comforts; But yet it is expedient sometimes for the Servants of Christ to be deprived of these Comforts, for Children to be deprived of Parents, and for Parents to be deprived of Children, which are accounted by Parents somtimes their dearest Comforts in this World, yet God sees it expedient for them sometimes to be deprived of them by Death. *Son of Man*, saith God, to *Ezech.* 24. 16. *Behold, I will take away the desire of thine Eyes with a stroke*; that is, his Wife, *and she died in the evening.* Sometimes some are taken away by some suddain accident, as all *Job's* Children were, sometimes they are deprived of them by Persecution, they are made to forsake Father and Mother, Wife and Children, and all for Christ's sake. *We have forsaken all*, saith *Peter* to Christ, *Mat.* 19. latter end. And sometimes they are deprived of the Comforts of them by having their Affections from them, as *Job* complains of the Wife of his bosom, that *she was a stranger to him.* And the *Psalmist*,

Psal.

Psal. 88. 8. Said, *Thou hast put away my acquaintance far from me.*— Brethren, it is expedient for us sometimes to be deprived of these Comforts and Relations, and verily, if our Relations, that are taken away from us, if they could speak when they are dead, Children would say to Parents, *Father and Mother, It is expedient for you that we go away.* Though it be a dear Babe, *yet, It is expedient for you, that I go away.* Though it be an only Child, *yet, It is expedient for you that I go away*; And so for other Relations, still remember this that it is expedient for the Servants of Christ sometimes to be deprived of their neareſt and deareſt Relations. Christ was as near and dear to the Disciples as any Relation in the World can be near and dear to us, yet saith Christ, *It is expedient for you that I go away.*

6. To instance in another thing, *The Ordinances and Institutions of the Lord.* They are dear and pretious to the hearts of the Saints and Servants of God, they are pretious things, and should be dear to every one of us. Saith *Job*, Chap. 12. 12. *I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food*; He had rather lose his meat and drink than miss of the Word of God. And, saith *David*, Psal. 122. 1. *I was glad when they said unto me, Come, let us go up to the House of the Lord.* The Ordinances of the Lord, they are and ought to be dear unto all the Saints and Servants of God, yet for all that I may say, it is expedient sometimes for the Servants of Christ to be deprived of the Ordinances of Christ. *David* found this by experience, he was deprived of the Ordinances, *Psal.* 42. 4. saith he, *When I remember these things, I pour out*

my soul in me; for I had gone with the multitude; I went with them to the House of God, with the voice of joy and praise; but now, saith he, *My soul is cast down*; And so, *Psal.* 63. 1. saith he, *I dwell in a dry and thirsty Land, where no water is.* He meant where there are no Ordinances; He could not wait upon God in his Ordinances; It was expedient for *David* to be deprived of the Ordinances. I remember a passage of the Church, *Cant.* 3. saith she, *By night on my Bed, I sought him whom my soul loveth, I sought him, but I found him not.* She cou'd not find Christ, she could not enjoy the Ordinances of Christ, nor Christ in the Ordinances; and truly this hath been, and may be the case of the dear Servants of Christ, to be deprived of the Ordinances, that are near and dear to them. *Heb.* 11. 37, 38. You see there how those *of whom the world was not worthy*, that they were glad to shift for their lives, to run up and down in Mountains, and Caves, and Dens of the Earth to hide themselves, and so were deprived of Ordinances and Communion with Saints; and it was expedient for them.

7. To instance in another thing yet higher, *'Tis expedient sometimes for the Saints and Servants of Christ to be deprived of Communion with Christ in holy Duties and Ordinances.* I may say in this case (because possibly it is not easy to be believed) as Christ said to the Disciples in the Text, Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, 'tis sometimes expedient for the Saints and Servants of Christ to be deprived of Communion with Christ in his Ordidances, though this is most dear and precious to them. *Exod.* 20. 24. saith God, *In all places where my*

my Name shall be recorded, thither will I come, and meet with my People, and bless them; that is, in his Ordinances, where his Name is recorded; and I say, sometimes it is expedient even for the very Saints and Servants of Christ to be deprived of the presence of Christ in his Ordinances, of Communion with Christ in his Ordinances, sometimes not to see Christ, nor to meet with Christ in holy Duties and Ordinances. *Cant.* 3. 1, 2, 3. *By night on my Bed*, saith the Spouse, *I sought him whom my soul loveth, I sought him, but I found him not*; *By night on my Bed I sought him*, I sought him in the Ordinances, that is the Bed where Christ hath Communion with his Saints and Servants, yet saith the Spouse, *I sought him on my Bed, but found him not*. And I remember *Job* hath an expression, *Chap.* 23. 8, 9. *Behold I go forward, but he is not there, and backward but I cannot perceive him, on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him; he hideth himself on the right hand that I cannot see him*; Saith *Job* I went forward, and I went backward, I went from Ordinance to Ordinance, but I found him not. The Lord may see this expedient for his dear Servants and Children even to be deprived of Communion with himself, in his own Institutions, which is hard to be believed, yet, nevertheless I tell you the Truth it is expedient for you that the Lord do with-hold his Presence sometimes from his own Ordinances to his own Servants. Yet once more.

8. Eightly and lastly, which is still yet higher, *It may be expedient sometimes for the Saints and Servants of Christ to be deprived of seeing the face*

of God, and enjoying the Sense of Gods favour, which in Truth is the most desirable thing in the World, it is even a Heaven upon Earth, a beginning of Heaven to see the face of God, and to enjoy the sence of the favour and loving-kindness of God. Saith *David*, *In thy favour is life*; my life lay in that, nay saith he, *Psal.* 63. 3. *Thy Loving-kindness is better than Life*, and yet I tell you, sometimes it is expedient for the Servants of God to be deprived even of the sence of the favour and loving-kindness of God, sometimes the Lord sees it expedient for him to go away in that sence; and therefore you find sometimes how *David* complains, *Psal.* 13. 1, 2. *How long O Lord, how long wilt thou hide thy face from mee? for ever?* And so, *Isa.* 14. 8. *For a little moment I hid my face from thee*— It was expedient for them that God did with-hold or hide his face, or the sense of his Loving-kindness from them. Nay, Brethren, shall I say further, if it were possible for a Saint to enjoy or to see the face of God in Heaven, as the Angels and Saints do, yet as long as they are upon the Earth, it is expedient sometimes for them to be deprived of that too. You know *Moses* was in the Mount with God, but it was expedient for *Moses* to come down from the Mount again, so long as he was clothed with flesh; it was expedient for *Moses* to come out from the immediate Presence of God. And you know what *Paul* saith; *That he was wrapt up into the third Heavens, and saw things unlawfull and impossible to utter*, yet it was expedient for *Paul* that he should be deprived of seeing

seeing and enjoying that Vision till he came to lay down the body.

And thus now you have seen the first thing propounded. The Demonstrations of this Truth by some particular Instances, *That it is expedient sometimes for the Saints and Servants of Christ to be deprived of those Comforts that are neerest and dearest to them in the World*; as Christ tells his Disciples here, *Nevertheless I tell you the Truth, it is expedient for you that I go away*, that they should be deprived of his personal Presence.

I had intended to have gone on further, to have made it appear to you by the grounds of it. There are five or six Grounds whereby it doth certainly appear that it is most expedient sometimes for the Servants of Christ to be deprived of their neerest and dearest Comforts they have in the World, and then to come to the third thing, but I would not willingly trespasse, only remember this, every one of you here before the Lord, We do not know how soon any of us may be deprived of those things that are looked upon as our neerest and dearest Comforts, when it comes to be our lot; remember what Christ saith, *It is expedient for you that I go away*, it is expedient for you to be deprived of this and the other Comfort, of your Estates, of your Accomodations, Liberty, and Ordinances; and though now you may enjoy Communion with God, yet it may be expedient for you to be deprived of it; remember that. And if any of you be deprived of your near Relations, as Children,—

remember what Christ hath here ſpoken, *It is expedient for you that I go away*, it is expedient for you that the Lord hath taken away ſuch a Child, ſuch a Son, or ſuch a Daughter; though it be an only Child, yet it is expedient for you that it be taken away. But I would not proceed any further at preſent.

SER-

SERMON II.

John. 16. 7 *Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, 'tis expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*

OUR Lord Jesus Christ, as you heard, is now comforting his Disciples against his departure. Christ had cast out a word, that he was to go away from them, and the word went to their very hearts, Because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your hearts. Now Christ goes about (as I said) to comfort them against their sorrow upon his departure from them, and he gives this as a ground of Comfort, to them; namely, That it was expedient for them that he should go away from them. Expedient! they thought it was impossible; How could that be? What? To lose the Bodily presence of Christ, to be deprived of that! Yes, saith he, *I tell you the truth, It is expedient for you that I go away.* Why? How can it be expedient? It is expedient, *Because, if I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but if I depart, I will send him unto you*; I will see that he shall come unto you: Therefore, saith he, *It is expedient that I go away.*

Doct.

remember what Christ hath here spoken, *It is expedient for you that I go away*, it is expedient for you that the Lord hath taken away such a Child, such a Son, or such a Daughter; though it be an only Child, yet it is expedient for you that it be taken away. But I would not proceed any further at present.

SER-

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Doct.

Doct. The Point or Truth propounded from hence was this,

That it is expedient sometimes for the Disciples and Servants of Jesus Christ that their neareſt and deareſt Comforts that they have in this World, ſhould go away from them.

Jeſus Chriſt his preſence was moſt dear and precious to the Diſciples; there was nothing in the World more dear and precious to them, they would have laid down their lives for him, not only *Peter* ſaid ſo, but ſo ſaid all the Diſciples; now yet Chriſt told them, it was expedient for them that he ſhould go away. I gave you the Demonſtrations of this Point the laſt time. I inſtanced in 7 or 8 things, wherein it was ſometimes expedient for the Saints and Servants of Chriſt to be deprived of their neareſt and deareſt Comforts in this Life, which I ſhall not now mention, becauſe I would finiſh this Point at this time.

II

I ſhall now proceed to the ſecond thing propounded, which, is to give the Grounds and Reaſons of it, Why it is expedient for the Saints and Servants of Chriſt thus to be deprived ſometimes of their neareſt and deareſt Comforts in this World; This is a hard ſaying, the Diſciples were hard to believe it, that it could be expedient for them that Chriſt ſhould go away from them. And ſo for a Soul to be deprived of the Light of Gods Countenance, that they cannot meet with God in holy

holy Duties and Ordinances, these are hard things to believe, that they can be expedient for them. Now to give you some Reasons, why it is expedient sometimes for the Saints and Servants of Christ to be deprived of their neareſt and deareſt Comforts in this World.

1. Though they cannot think ſo, yet notwithſtanding, *Becauſe their Heavenly Father knows it to be expedient for them.* Their heavenly Father, who is infinitely wiſe and infinitely loving towards them, he knows that thoſe things are expedient for them in this Life: you that are Parents, you know what is more expedient for your Children than they do themſelves; Alas! if Children were left to their own judgments, they would judge thoſe things expedient for them that are not expedient; they would judge it were better for them, to take their own liberty, and to do their own Wills, and that it were more expedient for them to be playing, than to go to School; ſo they would judge it expedient for them never to be put out to Apprenticeſhip, to be Servants, to go from their Fathers houſe; they think it were better for them to be always at home, under their Parents wing: but you that are Parents know what is more expedient for your Children than they do themſelves; and when they come to grow up then they will be ready to ſay, That their Fathers did judge better for them than they could have judged for themſelves; then they will ſay, If I had been left to mine own Judgment what was expedient for me then, I had not had this bringing up and Education that I have; nay then they may think that it

was

was expedient for them, that they were sometimes under the Rod. Truly Brethren, the Lord our Heavenly Father is infinitely wise, and loving to all his Children, he knows what is expedient for them better than they do. Christ knew that his going away from his Disciples, was more expedient for them, than they themselves could judge of it: so our heavenly Father knows that sometimes it is best for us to be deprived of our neareſt and deareſt Relations in the World; your Heavenly Father knows that you have need of these things, and he knows that sometimes you have need to be deprived of them. That is the first.

2. It is expedient sometimes for the Saints and Servants of Christ to be deprived of their neareſt and deareſt Comforts; *Because sometimes the Lord takes away one Comfort, and gives them that instead of it that is far better for them.* Therefore as Christ saith in the Text, *it is expedient for you that I go away*: why how can that be? It is more expedient for you, for you shall have the Holy Ghoſt, the Holy Spirit, I will send the Comforter to you, and that is better for you. He would give them the presence of his Spirit in stead of his own bodily presence, and that was better for them. Sometimes the Lord takes away one Comfort, and gives another instead of it, that is moſt expedient for us; as it is said, he removed the former Covenant, and that was done away, that so he might bring in a New Covenant in the stead of it, which was far better; the Old was done away, to make way for the New. God took away the child from *David*, that was begotten

in

in Adultery, and gave him a *Solomon*; so God deales sometimes with his Children, he takes away sometimes their outward Estates in the World, to give them a larger, an heavenly and spiritual Estate, to give them more of the true Riches; he takes away their outward Liberty, that they may have more spiritual Enlargment: thus many times the Lord deals with his Disciples and Servants, he takes away one mercy from them, which they think to be most expedient, and gives them another, which he knows to be more expedient for them. Therefore I remember *Joseph* said to his Brethren, when he sent from *Egypt* to them to come from the Land of *Canaan*, saith he, *Leave your Stuff behind you; you shall have that that is better for you than your Stuff, for all the good of the Land of* Egypt *is before you.* Thus the Lord makes an exchange, if he calls us to leave one Comfort, he intends to bestow a better Comfort upon us; thus it was with these Disciples. But,

3. *Sometimes the Lord takes away our neerest and deerest Comforts we have in the World in way of Correction and Chastisement*; to correct and chastise his people for their wantonness, for their forgetfulness of him, for their sitting loose from him, and living even as it were without God in the World, when the Lord sees that his Children do make a bad use of their Comforts and Mercies; the Lord is pleased to take them away from them; just as you that are Parents deal by your Children; if you see they go about to cut their fingers with the knife, you take away the knife from them; if they do waste and

destroy

destroy their meat, you take away their meat from them; thus the Lord deals with his Children; he sees his Children grow wanton, and careless, and forgetfull of God, then the Lord is pleased to take his Rod and correct them, by taking away their Comforts that are neareſt and deareſt to them. As now again for Parents, you see Parents when their Children grow forgetful of them, and do not mind what they say to them, and do not regard their Commands, then their Parents will be ready to take away from them that which they know to be neareſt and deareſt to them, by way of Correction. Thus the Lord is pleased to deal with his own Children, if he see they be perverse and disobedient, and careless, and rebellious, — It is just with the Lord then, in a way of correction and Chastisemnet, to take those mercies from them that he sees to be most near and dear to them: and the Lord doth it out of mercy and love to his Children, in depriving them of outward mercies, to deprive them of Health, and Strength, and Estate, and sometimes of their near Relations, by way of Chastisement, lest they should be condemned with the world; they would run upon their own ruine else, if the Lord let them alone. The Apostle gives the reason, 1 *Cor.* 11. 32. why so many were sick, and weak, and fallen asleep, saith he, *When ye are judged, ye are chastened of the Lord, that ye might not be condemned with the World.* And so the Lord is pleased to deal with his own Children and Servants, he deprives them of their neareſt and deareſt Comforts in the World, by way of Chastisement and Correction; therefore sometimes he hides his face from

from them, and many times takes his Ordinances from them, and if they do enjoy Ordinances, he with-holds his gracious presence from them, that they shall not see his Face in this and that Duty and Ordinance; and this the Lord doth by way of Chastisement.

4. The Lord doth sometimes deprive his Children of their neareſt and deareſt Comforts in this World, *Becauſe he will bring them thereby to be pliable to his own Will, and train them up in a courſe of Obedience to his own Will.* Look now, as Parents that they may train up their Children to be obedient to them in every thing, to be at their beck, sometimes they will take away from them that which is neareſt and deareſt to them; Give me that thing, and I muſt have ſuch a thing, will a wiſe Father ſay ſometimes to a Child, to train him up in a way of Submiſſion to his Fathers will. So the Lord deals with his own Children, when he ſees we have this or that Comfort which is near or dear to us. Now that God may train us up to his own Will, and that we may learn ſubjection to his Will, the Lord calls for this Comfort and that mercy, that is ſo dear to us, that Yoke-fellow, and that Child, or whoever it be that is near and dear to us; the Lord doth ſometimes call it from us, and take it away, that we may learn to be ſubmiſſive to his Will; as it is ſaid concerning Chriſt, *Heb.* 5.8. *That Chriſt learned Obedience by his Sufferings*, and truly ſo when Chriſt came to drink the Cup that his Father put into his hand, ſaith he, *The Cup which my Father hath given me, ſhall I not drink it?* He learned Obedience by his Sufferings

Sufferings; and so the Lord may teach his Children Obedience by training them up in this way, to take away their neareſt and deareſt Comforts from them that they may come to be at the Lords will and word in every thing. And thus the Lord trained up *Abraham*, ſaith God to *Abraham*, I muſt have you to go out of your own Country, to leave your Friends and Relations behind, to go into a ſtrange place, and *Abraham* did ſo; And then when the Lord had given him an only and a beloved Son, ſaith God to him, Come I muſt take that Son from you, go and Sacrifice him your ſelf to me; thus God trained up *Abraham* to his foot (as it were) which is the expreſſion of the Holy Ghoſt, *Iſa.* 41. 2. *Abraham* was brought to the foot of God, to the beck of God. Thus God deals with his Children, he trains them up to be ſubmiſſive to his own will, to his ordering, for every thing, therefore God will ſometimes take away this Comfort and that Comfort, though never ſo near and dear to us. That is the fourth Reaſon.

5. The Lord doth ſometimes deprive his Children of their neareſt and deareſt Comforts, *That they may learn to fear before him*, that they may ſtand in awe of him, as it is ſaid *Pſal.* 55.19. Becauſe they are in no change, therefore they fear not God, they meet with no changes, they have their wills, and they enjoy their Comforts here in the World; and becauſe they have no changes, therefore they fear not God. And truly the Lords own people are apt to grow ſecure in time of Proſperity when they meet with few changes, they are apt to grow ſecure. It was

Davids

Davids case, Psal. 30. 5, 6. *I said in my prosperity I shall never be moved.* And so I remember *Job* hath such an expression, *Chap.* 29. 18. *I said I shall dye in my Nest*—; His nest was feathered round about him, he was comfortably supplyed with all manner of Necessaries and comforts in this Life, and saith he, *I began to grow secure, I said I should dye in my Nest*; And therefore the Lord is pleased to bring Changes upon his People, to awake them out of their security, to cause them more to fear God, and to acknowledge their dependance upon God, to fear that God, that is able to bring great Changes upon them, to fear him that is able to take away their neareſt and deareſt Comforts. Thus the Lord deals with his Children, to train and nurture them up in his fear.

6. And Lastly. The Lord does sometimes deal thus with his own Children, to deprive them of their neareſt and deareſt Comforts that they have in this Life, *That so he may make them to look more after a Heavenly Inheritance, that shall never be taken from them*; where there shall be no Changes, where they shall be past all fear of ever being deprived of any comfort they shall enjoy. Therefore 'tis said of the Patriarchs, *Heb.* 11. 14, 16. 'Tis said in the *13th Verse*, They confessed, *That they were Strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth*, for they that say such things, declare plainly *That they seek a Country* but now they desire a better Country, which is, *an Heavenly*— They are Strangers and Pilgrims in the World, they meet with great Changes in the World, and therefore say they, *We are Strangers and Pilgrims*; we are going to a Country

where there shall be no change. So *Heb.* 10. 34. The Apostle speaks of those that were exercised with changes, that they had their Estates taken away, and were plundred of all that they had, they made nothing of that; because *they had an eye to the recompence of reward*, the inheritance of Heaven, and that made them look for a heavenly Country, because then they should be past all changes, there should be no plundering there, no deprivation of any Comfort that they there shall enjoy, that is an Inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away; there shall be no changes throughout all Eternity. And thus now you have seen the Reasons and Grounds of the Point, That it is expedient sometimes for the Saints and Disciples of Christ to be deprived of their neerest and dearest Comforts that they do enjoy in this World.

III.

1. But to come to *the Third thing* propounded, and that is, *to shew, That the Enjoyment of the Comforter, the presence of the Spirit is more expedient for the Saints and Disciples of Christ, than to enjoy the bodily Presence of Christ himself.* For so Christ intimates here to his Disciples, saith he, *It is expedient for you that I go away*, that you be deprived of my bodily Presence, for then you shall have the Comforter, the Spirit; if I go not away the Comforter will not come; therefore it is more expedient for them to have the Presence of the Spirit, than to enjoy the bodily Presence of Christ.

Truly Brethren, as long as Christ was with them

them in the flesh, they could not expect to have such a communication of the Spirit, as they should have when Christ was taken from them. When Christ was taken from them, when he ascended up to Heaven, then the Spirit was to be given down; And that is given by the Holy Ghost, *John* 7. 37, 38, 39. as a Reason, why the Spirit was not yet given to them: They had some drops of the Spirit, They had not the pouring out of the Spirit, because, saith he, *Verse* 39. *Jesus was not yet glorified*; he had said, *verse* 38. *That, he that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow Rivers of living Water; but this he spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive, for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.* No, they could not expect the pourings out of the Spirit, till Jesus Christ had left the World, and was gone into Heaven. For Brethren, when Jesus Christ ascended up to Heaven, then the Father made him welcome, and sat him down at his own right hand in glory, he gave him the highest place of Dignity in Heaven, all power in Heaven and Earth was put into his Hands, and he gave him the Donation or Giving out of the Spirit, the giving out of the gifts of the Spirit; For saith the Psalmist, *Psal.* 68. 18. *When he ascended up on high, then he received the Spirit*, and the gifts of the Spirit to be given out to his people; This is the Reward that God the Father gave to Christ, after his great labour and suffering in the World, assoon as ever he came into Heaven: God exalted him with this Exaltation, and then he gave him the fulness of the Spirit, to give out when he would,

therefore assoon as Christ ascended up to Heaven, presently after there was an abundant pouring out of the Spirit, *Acts* 2. You know the Holy Ghost fell down upon the Disciples like fiery cloven tongues, and then they spake with tongues, they were able to speak in every mans Language; and then you see the Apostle *Peter* made a Speech to them that heard it, and wondred at it, *Verse* 33. and saith he, This is the Fruit and Effect of Christs Ascension into Heaven. *Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father, the Promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which you now see and hear.* Christ leaving the World, and being exalted in Heaven, he had this power to give out the Spirit, and saith he, this is the Fruit of it, *He hath shed forth this, which you now see and hear*; Therefore if Christ had not left the Disciples, then the Disciples, and Servants, and Apostles of Jesus Christ, had been destitute of the pourings out of the Spirit upon them. It is true indeed, it cannot be denyed but the enjoyment of Christs bodily presence, was a most desirable thing, very desirable to enjoy the bodily presence of Jesus Christ, to see God in our flesh. I remember *Job* did rejoyce in it, in the hopes of it, many hundreds and some thousands of yeares beforehand, in the midst of his great Troubles and Afflictions, *Chap.* 19. 25, 26, 27. saith he, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and with these eyes I shall see him*; And this was matter of Comfort to him many hundreds of years before hand, in the midst of those Sufferings and Troubles he met

withall, that he should see his Redeemer with his Eyes in the flesh. And Brethren, the sight of Christ in the flesh, it is a sight that is matter of Admiration to the very Angels in Heaven; *God manifest in the flesh, seen of Angels*, it was to the Admiration of Angels, worth their looking upon, 1 *Timothy* 3. 16. *Great is the Mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the Flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels*; it was a great sight to the glorious Angels, they desired to pry into that great Mystery; and it was one of holy *Austines* wishes, he wished the sight of three things in this World, and this was the chiefest of all; he did desire *to see* Rome *in its glory*; Paul *in the Pulpit, and Christ in the flesh.* And Brethren, the sight and enjoyment of the Presence of Christ in our Nature will be one of the happy sights in Heaven, it will be a great part of the glory and happiness of the Saints in Heaven to see Jesus Christ, therefore saith Christ, *Father, I will that those whom thou hast given mee, may be with me, where I am, that they may behold my glory*, John 17. 24. So the Apostle *John*, 1. *Epist.* 3. 2. *When he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.* I tell you it is a desirable thing to see Jesus Christ in the Flesh, and yet this I may say, that it is possible for men and women to see Christ in the flesh, and yet be never the better for it. You know when Jesus Christ was in the World, the *Jewes* saw him, and were near unto him, and yet were never the better for him; We read that when Christ was sent by *Pilate* to *Herod*, *Herod* rejoyced to see him, but he was never the better for that sight; for he

derided him, and mocked him, and sent him away. You know *Judas* had a full Sight of Christ, he lived many years in the family with Christ, yet *Judas* was never the better for seeing and beholding the bodily presence of Christ. The Reprobates, the wicked of the World, at the last day shall see Christ in his highest glory, but shall be never a whit the better. I remember 'tis said, *Mat.* 14. 30. *That all the Tribes of the Earth shall see him, and mourn*; they shall behold him in his glory, and yet mourn. What shall we say then? You see we may behold Jesus Christ in the Flesh, and yet be never the better, but now to enjoy the presence of the Spirit here in this life, a Soul cannot enjoy that, but he shall be the better for it. It is true indeed, in Heaven, there the Saints shall enjoy the presence of Christ, and the fulness of the Spirit too, but here in this life for the Saints to enjoy the presence of the Spirit, it is more expedient for them, more profitable, more advantagious for them, than to enjoy the very personal presence of Christ.

Now to give you a few Reasons for it, to shew you wherein it is more profitable, more expedient to have the presence of the Spirit, than to enjoy the very bodily presence of Christ.

1. In regard that *By enjoying the presence of the Spirit they may have more reall Comfort than they could have by the enjoyment of the personal presence of Christ.* You shall see the Disciples themselves all the time that they did enjoy the personal presence of Christ in the World, they had not that measure of joy and rejoycing as they had afterward, they had not that measure of Comfort and

and Consolation all the time that Christ lived in the Earth, and conversed with them, as they had after Christ was taken away from them; then they had more real joy. Alas! before they were subject to griefs and troubles at every turn, when they came into danger then they were affrighted and troubled, when they were in a storm at Sea, and were ready to sink they cryed out and were afraid; but now after Christ was gone and ascended, and the Spirit fell down upon them, you shall see then how full of joy and comfort and consolation they were, and so Christ tells them before in this very Chapter, *verse* 21. *A Woman when she is in travel hath sorrow, because her Hour is come, but assoon as she is delivered she rejoyceth*: So it shall be with you, saith Christ; whilest I am with you, you cannot have such joy, and when you hear of my departure, sorrow filleth your hearts, but when I am taken from you, and the Comforter is come, then you shall rejoyce; and therefore observe, when Christ speaks of sending the Spirit instead of his own bodily presence, he expresseth it under the Notion of the Comforter, *When the Comforter shall come*: O then they shall have such comforts, and consolation, and joy, that they never had before; and so, *John* 14. 16. *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter*; and so, *verse* 26. *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my Name*—. So *Chap.* 15.26. *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father*—. Still when Christ speaks of sending the Spirit, he speaks of sending him under the Notion of a Comforter, which is to imply, that they shall

have more true matter of Comfort, of joy and rejoycing, than ever they had before by his bodily presence, and therefore saith the Apostle *Paul*, *As our Tribulations abound for Christ, so our Consolations also do super-abound*, and saith the Apostle again, *Rom.* 5. 3. *We glory in Tribulations*, which is an high expression. Before, upon every occasion, they were afraid when they came into danger, but now, saith the Apostle, *We glory in Tribulations*, we joy and rejoyce in the highest degree of rejoycing. The Apostles, whilest Christ lived, never had that fulness of Spiritual joy and consolation as they had after Christ was gone, and the Spirit was sent down from Heaven, and therefore that is one Respect why it is better to enjoy the presence of the Spirit than the personal Presence of Christ.

2. *By having the Spirit, the Comforter, sent down to them, thereby they come to have more Boldness and Spiritual Courage than they had before.* Alas! before how ready were they to be affrighted and scared at every turn, whilest they had the presence of Christ; you see how they were affrighted when Christ was apprehended, they all forsook him and fled; and when *Peter* would needs peep into the Judgment Hall, you see how he was dismayed and afraid when a Maid spoke to him, and told him *Thou art one of his Companions*, and he denyed it and swore he never knew him, so timorous and fearful he was; but afterwards, he grew bold and couragious when the Spirit did descend upon him; see the Courage of *Peter* and the Apostles, *Acts*, 4. when they came before the Judgment Seat, *Verse.* 8. *And when they had*

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set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what Name have you done this? then Peter *filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them,* Verse 10. *Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.* This was a Spirit of Boldness. And *Verse* 13. *When they saw the Boldness of Peter and John* — Now they had more Spiritual Boldness, Courage and Audacity than they had before, now the Spirit was poured down upon them. And *Verse* 19. when they commanded them to speak no more in the Name of Jesus, *Then Peter and John said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.* Thus by the plentiful effusion of the Spirit they grew more spiritually bold.

3. When they were deprived of Christs personal presence, then being indued with the Spirit, *They had more Christian strength and power given to them than they had before, to act and do for Christ*; Therefore then they were said to be endued with power from on high, *Luke* 24. 49. When Christ was about to ascend up to Heaven he told them they should be endued with *Power from on high*; Ay, the Spirit is a Spirit of power, 2 *Tim.* 1. 7. *God hath given to us not the Spirit of Fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind*; The Spirit of Power. When the Spirit falls down upon a person 'tis a Spirit of Power, that they shall be able to do and suffer for the Name of Christ very great things: they are now endued with power from above,

above. Now Christ was gone and the Spirit come, therefore you see how they did act. They went up and down, and could preach every day from place to place, they travelled up and down to preach the Gospel; and you shall see what great works they did, as great works as Christ himself did do when he was upon Earth, they raised up *Tabitha* from the dead, *Acts* 9. And it is said, *Acts* 19. that the very *shadow* of *Peter*, and the *Apostles* passing by cured them that were sick. We do not read of such miracles when Christ was upon Earth; great power they had then; see what power *Paul* had to go through Sufferings, 2. *Cor.* 11. 23, 24, 25. How he suffered abundantly, and saith he, *I know that tribulations and sufferings abide for me in every place, but none of these things move me*, he was indued with power from on high: now saith he, *I am able to do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me*, Philip. 4. 13.

4. By having the Presence of the Spirit with them after they were deprived of the bodily presence of Christ, *Then they had a more powerful gift and Spirit of prayer.* Never such a Spirit of Prayer all the time that Christ lived with them, then the Spirit of Prayer was poured down upon them, as it was prophesied, *Zech.* 12. 10. *I will pour out upon the house of Judah the Spirit of Grace and Supplication*; now they were able to pray, to pour out their Souls abundantly to God in prayer: before, all the time that Christ was amongst them, they were poor shallow weak Creatures, not able to pray, and therefore they came to Christ, *Luke* 11. 2. *Lord teach us to pray as John taught his Disciples*, they had not the Spirit of prayer then,

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in comparison with what they had afterwards, therefore Christ was fain to dictate words to them as you do to your little Children, to say word after word after you; thus they came to Christ, Lord teach us to pray: but afterward when Christ was ascended and left them, and the Spirit poured out upon them, then they were able to pour out their prayers upon every occasion; although 'tis true, as *Paul* saith, *Rom.* 8. *We know not how to pray as we ought*, that is, we our selves left to our selves, *but the Spirit within us helps our infirmities with sighs and groans that cannot be uttered.* The Apostles prayed so strongly that they shook the very room where they were praying, *Acts* 4, 23. *And being let go they went to their own Company, and reported all that the Chief Priests and Elders said unto them, and when they heard that, they lift their voice to God with one accord*, and mark *Verse* 31. *And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together.* So *Paul* and *Silas*, *Acts* 16. 'tis said, *They prayed at Midnight and praised God, and the very foundation of the Prison was shaken by their very Prayers*; There was a mighty powerfull Spirit of Prayer that fell down upon them when Christ was gone from them: therefore in that respect also the presence of the Spirit is more expedient for them than to enjoy the bodily presence of Christ. And let me add one thing more.

5. It was more expedient for them to have the presence of the Spirit, than to have the bodily presence of Christ, because by *Enjoying the presence of the Comforter, hereby they had more assistance and more powerfull success in their work and labour*

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in their Ministry, than ever they had before all the time they had the presence of Christ; I say, Their Ministry was more powerful and effectual than ever it was before. 'Tis true, they went up and down and preached some particular times, but we do not read of any great matter was done, that many were converted by their Ministry all the time they lived with Christ; but now when Christ was gone, and the Spirit fell down upon them, Immediately you shall see, *Acts* 2. When *Peter* preached one Sermon, more were converted at that Sermon, than there was by all the Apostles preaching, that we read of, all the time they lived with Christ upon Earth, there were *Three thousand* brought in at one Sermon. And afterwards, *Chap.* 20. 21. 'Tis said, *There were many thousand Believers brought in by the Ministry of the Apostles, because the Spirit did assist them*; There was a mighty effusion of the Spirit, and a great success upon their Labours and Endeavours. And so Christ here in the Text, to comfort his Disciples about his departure, saith he, *Nevertheless, I tell you the Truth, it is expedient for you that I go away.* What then? Saith he, *I will send the Comforter*, and you shall find marvellous success by the presence of the Spirit in your Ministry; When he is come, *He shall convince the World of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment.*

By enjoying the presence of the Spirit with them, they had mighty success in their Ministry, in their Labours and Endeavours in the Work that Christ had called them to. Therefore, I say in these respects, it was more expedient for them to have the presence of the Spirit, than Christ's Bodily presence

presence amongst them. And thus now I have finished this Point, as to the Explication, Proof and clearing of it. Now briefly to speak something by way of Application, and so to wind up all in three or four words.

Application 1. *Then hence we are to be admonished and warned to take heed, That our Hearts and Affections be not inordinately set upon any Creature-Comfort, though never so near and dear unto us*: Because they must be taken away from us, or we from them. If we had the Bodily presence of Christ amongst us, we are not to set our hearts inordinately upon him, meerly for his Bodily presence, so as to have our Hearts, as it were, rent or torn asunder for the want of his bodily presence: So whatever Creature-Comfort we enjoy in this World, take heed that our Hearts and Affections be not inordinately set upon them, because there will come a time when we must part, they must go from us, or we must go from them; as Christ told his Disciples here, it is expedient for you that I go away: and this was that that did fill their hearts so with Sorrow, because they were so inordinately set upon his bodily presence. There are no Creature-Comforts that we can enjoy in this World but we must be taken from them, therefore it should be our Wisdom to have our hearts and affections set loose from them: because the closer we are glued to any Creature-Comfort, the greater rending and tearing there will be when we come to be deprived of it. Truth is, our hearts and affections are apt to cleave too close to creature-comforts, as outward Relations, Husbands or Wives, Parents or Children, our hearts are apt to

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be glued too close to them, to be inordinately set upon them; and therefore hence it comes to passe that it is so grievous to us to part with them, and that we are so inordinate in our sorrow and grief, when the Lord saith, it is expedient for you that I take this or that Comfort from you: and therefore we should do well to follow the Apostles Counsel and Admonition which he gives us, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29, 30, 31. *To use the World, as if we used it not, to enjoy as if we enjoyed not, to possesse as if we possessed not: for the fashion of this World passeth away.* It passeth away from us, and therefore let us take heed that our hearts and affections be not inordinately set upon any creature-comfort. Brethren, if we set our hearts upon any thing, let us set them upon those things that shall never go away from us, and look after these things that shall abide with us, as to look after Union with Christ by faith, which shall never go away from us. To look after the pardon of sin, and peace with God, reconciliation to God through the blood of Christ, which shall never go away from us, neither shall we go from them; therefore now let it be our care and business to chuse the better part that shall never be taken away from us, chuse *Maries* part, endeavour after the Communications of the Spirit, the Comforter, the Holy Ghost which shall abide with you for ever; but I say take heed that your hearts and affections be not inordinately set upon any creature-comfort, for then your sorrow and grief will be the greater upon your parting with them, and it is expedient for you to part, either you from them or they from you, and you know not how soon. That is the first.

2. Then, *Hence we may see our great folly, in mourning and grieving immoderately for the parting from, or losing and being deprived of, any Creature-Comfort, or Outward-Enjoyment.* Here is our folly; Because, possibly we mourn and grieve for that which is most expedient for us: And, Is not that folly? Though we do not know so much, yet the parting with this or that Relation, with this or that Child, or with all our Children, with this Husband, or that Wife, it may be most expedient for us. I say therefore, Take heed of grieving immoderately, or inordinately for it, because it may be our great folly; it may be more expedient for us that they go away, than that they stay with us. And truly now it may be we grieve inordinately for the loss of our Children, or such a Child; We do not know what they might have proved if the Lord had lengthened out their lives to us, they might have proved the greatest vexations that ever we met with in the World, though now it may be we cannot think so. We do not know how expedient it is; it may be more expedient for us that they go away; Therefore mourn not inordinately, but submit to the holy Will of God, that knows what is more expedient for us, than we do our selves.

And so for our Estates; the Lord takes away our Estates from us, our Livelihood in the World, and brings us into a poor and low Estate and Condition; Well, do not mourn inordinately for the loss of it; for it may be the more expedient for you to be deprived of your Estates, than to have them continued unto you; possibly you would have grown more carnal,

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more sinfull, more profane, insolent, vain, scornfull, more lascivious, wanton and loose; and so you might have run upon your own ruine and destruction if the Lord had left you to enjoy what you would have. Saith *Solomon*, Pro. 1. 32. *The prosperity of the wicked shall destroy him.* The Lord doth sometimes leave some to a prosperous estate, and it may be a means of their utter undoing. Therefore it may be more expedient for you that they go away; therefore let us not be inordinate in our grief and sorrow for the loss of any Creature-Comfort.

3. Then, *Hereby we may see the foolishness and vanity of these apprehensions that do sometimes come into our mindes.* O we are ready to think sometimes, if we had lived when Christ was here in the flesh, when Christ's bodily presence was in the world, or if we could now see and enjoy the bodily presence of Christ; O, we should go to him upon all occasions; O then we could go and worship him, and reverence him, and honour him, and adore him, and admire him. I tell you these are vain fancies and imaginations, for the injoyment of the presence of the Spirit is more advantagious to us than the enjoyment of the bodily presence of Christ could be, and if Christ were now in the world in our dayes, as he was before, it may be we could not tell how we might come to speak to him, and see him, he might be at one end of the world, and we at the other; but now we have this advantage, we may go to Christ in any part of the World, and enjoy Communion with Christ, and speak to Christ in Prayer in any place, and we may worship, reverence, honour and

love

love Jesus Christ, now he is in Heaven and Glory. It is said of the Disciples, *Luke* 24. 51, 52. *They returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the Temple, praising and blessing God.*

I tell you we may worship, and reverence and honour Jesus Christ, now he is in Heaven, as much as we could have done if he were bodily present with us. It is therefore a vain imagination to think, O if Christ were now present, what worship we would now give him, how we would adore him, and acquaint him with our Necessities at every turn. You may have as much access to him now, as if he were in the World, and you may have more of the Spirit given to you now than you should have then. And let me add this by the way, not to let your mindes go too much out about the personal presence of Christ here on earth; I do not speak to condemn that opinion *That Christ shall personally reign upon Earth a thousand years*, which is the opinion of many godly and learned Men, and I would not speak contradictorily to it, though for my own part I conceive Christ shall have a glorious Church upon Earth, and Reign upon Earth a thousand Years too; Yet I must needs say, I do not apprehend as to his Bodily presence. 'Tis true, indeed, Jesus Christ shall come from Heaven at the day of Judgement, and appear personally in the Clouds; and if you observe it, you shall find when the holy Ghost, in Scripture, speaks about the appearing of Christ, you shall find he speaks of that appearing that shall be at the Day of Judgment: As, 1 *Tim.* 6. 14. Saith the Apostle there, *I charge you that you keep this Commandment without spot,*

untill the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now what appearing is this? or when shall Christ appear? look 2 *Epistle* 4. 1. *I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his Kingdom.* When he shall come to Judgment, then he shall appear personally.

Objection.

But you will say, *May he not appear for all that before in this World? and may he not come in his own person and live in the World before that?*

Answer.

Truly, Brethren, I have no warrant for that, but rather to the contrary; for the Apostle saith, *Heb.* 9. 28. speaking of Christs coming to Judgment, *To them that look for him shall he appear the second time* — So that his appearing to judge the World shall be his second appearing, to you that look for him shall he appear the second time. Now, when he was incarnate in the flesh, then he appeared the first time, but he shall appear the second time, that is, when he comes to judg the World: therefore, I say, I have no warrant for Christs being personally on Earth before the day of Judgment; only 'tis true, there shal be a glorious appearance of the power of the Spirit, & there shall be a glorious Church upon Earth a thousand years, that I do believe; but for the personal appearance of Christ and his living personally in the World, I confess I have not such grounds for that. But I would

would not trouble your heads about these things, neither would I have you trouble your Fancies much about them, but look after the enjoyment of the spiritual presence of Christ, that will be more advantagious and expedient for you than the very personal presence of Christ. That is the third word of Application. I have but one word more and that is this.

4. From hence now we may have a strong Antidote and Cordial against all our sorrows, griefs and troubles in parting with any creature-comfort, though it be our neareſt and dearest comforts in this World. Know this, for your comfort and support under all, that it is most expedient for you; this is the very cordial and support and antidote, that Jesus Christ himself prescribed to his own Disciples against their immoderate sorrow; *because I have said these things* (saith he) *sorrow hath filled your hearts*, in the Verse before the Text, and now he comes to give them a cordial and andidote against it in the Text, *Nevertheless, I tell you the Truth, it is expedient for you that I go away*, Not for me only: It was expedient indeed for Christ himself to go away, that he might be advanced at the right hand of God, that he might be indued with the Spirit, and have all fulness of gifts to give out, it was expedient for him, *but* (saith he) *I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you*, and this he gives them as a cordial and antidote against their sorrow, *it is expedient for you that I go away*; but they could not tell how to believe it, that it should be expedient for them that he should go away, therefore saith Christ, *Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is expedient for*

you that I go away. Truly, Brethren, this is the very Cordial that Christ himself gave against immoderate sorrow and grief of mind in parting with any creature-comfort in this World: remember, 'tis expedient for you, if the Lord call us to part with any thing that is near and dear to us, near and dear Yoke-Fellows, Husband or Wife, or an only Son, well, here is the Cordial and Antidote that Christ gave, know, saith he, That it is expedient for you that this near Comfort go away from you, it is for your advantage, profit, and benefit.

Brethren, I pray let me ask you this Question, Do you think that any creature comfort that you enjoy in this World can be nearer and dearer to you than the personal presence of Christ was to the Disciples? Yet saith Christ, *It is expedient for you that I go away*; truly so I may say as to every Comfort that God takes from us, It is expedient for us that this comfort be taken from us. It may be you cannot see it now, but you may see it afterward, it is that which your heavenly Father knows to be expedient for you, and he is wiser than we. This may be a Cordial and Antidote both for the time past, and for the time present and to come: the time past, when we call to remembrance, O the comfort that sometimes we had, the comfortable enjoyment of such a Relation, such a Husband, or such a Wife, or such a Child, our hearts are ready to bleed afresh at the remembrance of it. Now here is a Cordial and Antidote that Christ himself prescribes, I tell you the truth, saith Christ, *It is expedient for you.* O I cannot tell how to think it can be expedient for

me to lose such a Husband, such a Wife, such a Child; yea, saith Christ, I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that such a comfort be taken away from you. So for the time present, if God take away a near Relation, or Wife, or such a Child, remember that Christ hath said, it is expedient for you that this Child should go, that this Comfort, that this Relation should go away from you.

And Brethren, if we do believe that it is expedient for us, why then should we be excessive in our grief and sorrow? I pray tell me, if a Physician come unto you, and by reason of your distemper prescribe you some bitter Pill, or bitter Potion to take, or a strong vomit, or he prescribe a great deal of blood to be taken from you, these things are somewhat hard, but he tells you it is expedient for you, and you will yield to it, you will take the Vomit or Purge though never so grievous to you, you will take the Pill though never so bitter to you, and if he will draw so much blood from you, let him take it. So the Lord is pleased to deal as a wise Physician, he prescribes sometimes a bitter Pill for us to swallow down, O to lose such a Yoke-Fellow, or such a Child, this is a strong vomit, a bitter purge, this is like the drawing of a mans blood from his heart: but our heavenly Father knows what is most expedient for us, *I tell you the Truth*, saith Christ, *it is expedient for you that I go away*; it is expedient for you that I take so much blood from you, that I put you upon the swallowing of this bitter pill. And remember, and lay up this Antidote against a time of need, we know not how suddenly any of us

here before the Lord may be called to part with our neareſt and deareſt Comforts, we know not how the Lord may deal with us: well, remember this Antidote, and lay it up for the time to come, remember and ſay, Well, it is expedient for me, that this and that Comfort be taken away from me; and you have heard the Reaſons. O remember theſe words of our Lord Jeſus, which he ſpake to his Diſciples to comfort them againſt their griefs and ſorrow for being deprived of the greateſt comfort they had in this World. *Nevertheleſs, I tell you the Truth; it is expedient for you that I go away.*

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Conversion of Souls, great Joy to the Ministers of Christ.

SERMON III.

JOHN 16. 8.

And when he is come, he will reprove the world of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of Judgment.

IN this Chapter (as you have heard) our Lord Jesus Christ doth fore-warn and fore-arm his Disciples against Persecution and Sufferings, which they were like to meet withal; and this he speaks of in the first four *Verses*; and then he doth endeavour to comfort their hearts against that sorrow that had possessed them for his going away from them: Saith he, *Now I go my way to him that sent me: and because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your hearts.* Christ endeavours to comfort their hearts against their great sorrow; and this in the general he proposeth for their Comfort; Namely, saith he, *'Tis expedient for you that I go away*: 'Tis not only expedient for me, but it is expedient for you that I go away: But they could hardly think so: And then

he gives them this Reaſon, ſaith he, *If I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but if I depart, I will ſend him unto you.* But then they might be ready to ſay, Lord! Suppoſe the Comforter do come, will that make recompence for our loſs of thy preſence? What if the Comforter do come? what if we have the preſence of thy Spirit? yet thy preſence might ſeem to be more comfortable to us. Now Chriſt lays in further for that, ſaith he, If the Comforter come, that will be ſtill better for you than my bodily preſence is; for if he come, he will be with you to aſſiſt you in your Miniſtry: He will accompany the Miniſtration of the Goſpel in your mouth; he will make your Miniſtration to be ſucceſful, and effectual, for convincing and converting. Thus now Chriſt doth lay in againſt their ſorrow, that they might have upon his departure from them, that though he went from them, yet they ſhould have that from the promiſe that ſhould countervail all that comfort and joy that they had by his bodily preſence; And this ſeems to be the very ſcope and intendment of theſe words. *When he is come*, ſaith he, He will ſo work with your Miniſtry, that it ſhall *Reprove* or *Convince the World of Sin, of Righteouſneſs, and of Judgement.*

Before I come to the Point, becauſe the words ſeem to have ſome difficulty in them, and becauſe there ſeems to be ſome variety in the Interpretation of them, I ſhall briefly give you a hint of what I apprehend to be the moſt proper meaning of theſe words. As now,

1. What

1. What doth he mean by *Reproving*? *He ſhall reprove the World*,—

2. What doth he mean by the *World*? And then,

3. How he ſhall *Reprove the World of Sin, of Righteouſneſs, and of Judgement.*

I. The word here tranſlated *Reprove*, hath a three-fold acceptation in Scripture.

1. *Sometimes it ſignifies to Reprove*, as here 'tis tranſlated: And ſo I remember, *Titus* 1. 13. *This Witneſs is true: Wherefore rebuke them ſharply*, or reprove them ſharply: 'Tis the ſame Word. So here 'tis tranſlated in the Text. Though I think that is not the proper ſignification or intendment of it in this place. For, obſerve it, It is not ſo proper to ſay, That the Spirit, when he comes, ſhall *Reprove* the World of *Righteouſneſs*, he may *reprove* them of *Sin*, and *rebuke* them for *Sin*, but not of *Righteouſneſs*, nor for *Righteouſneſs*, nor of *Judgement*. That is one ſignification of the word, to Reprove or Rebuke.

2. Sometimes *the word ſignifies to make manifeſt, or to make evident, to make apparent*, ſo you ſhall find it, John 3. 20, 21. *Every one that doth evil, hateth the Light, Neither cometh to the Light, leſt his deeds ſhould be reproved* (or made manifeſt) and it is expounded in the next verſe, *made manifeſt*; *But he that doth Truth cometh to the Light, that his deeds may be* [*made manifeſt*] *that they are wrought in God*; it is the ſame Word here in the Text. But this cannot be the meaning of this Word in the Text, that he ſhall make manifeſt Sin, and

and make manifeſt Righteouſneſs, and make manifeſt Judgment: though there be a Truth in that, yet this cannot be the full intendment of this word in this place.

3. There is another ſignification of it, and that is to *convince*, and ſo 'tis in the Margin, *He ſhall convince the World of Sin, of Righteouſneſs, and of Judgment*; and ſo I remember it is, *John* 8.46. ſaith Chriſt there, *Which of you doth convince me of Sin?* It is the ſame Word: he doth not ſay, which of you charges me with Sin? for they did charge him with Sin enough, and they did reprove and rebuke him for Sin, they ſaid, he was a *Blaſphemer*; therefore that cannot be the meaning of the Word to charge or reprove him of Sin; but, *which of you can convince me of Sin?* to make it apparent without gain-ſaying, that I am guilty of any Sin. And ſo I think that place, *Tit.* 1.9. *holding faſt the faithful Word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able by ſound Doctrine, both to exhort, and to convince the Gain-ſayers.* And ſo I ſhall take it in this ſenſe all along; when the Comforter is come he ſhall aſſiſt you in your Miniſtry, ſo as he ſhall thereby convince the World of Sin, of Righteouſneſs, and of Judgment.

II. *What doth he mean by the World?* Not the whole Univerſe, the Fabrick of Heaven and Earth, no, that cannot be the meaning of it: but it is to be underſtood of Men, the World of Men, of ſinful Men, Men that are guilty of Sin; and more particularly, by the World we may underſtand the unbelieving World, a company of unbelievers: Now unbelievers they may ſome of them be elected and are elected, and ſhall be brought to

believe

believe in Chriſt in time, through the Goſpel; and ſome of them are not elected, and ſhall never be brought to believe in Chriſt. Now which of theſe doth Chriſt here mean? when he ſpeaks of the World, whether he means only thoſe Unbelievers that are elected, and ſhall be brought on to believe (ſo ſome think): or whether he means the Unbelievers of the World that were never elected, and ſhall never be brought to believe in Chriſt (ſo others.) Truly I ſee nothing to the contrary but we may include both, namely, Unbelievers that are not elected, the Holy Ghoſt ſhall come and convince them of Sin, though they ſhall go no further, there may be convictions where no converſion follows; and this is the work of the Spirit to convince of Sin, and he ſhall alſo convince Unbelievers that are elected, convince them effectually, ſo as they ſhall be brought on to converſion, and I think eſpecially and chiefly our Saviour here meaneth thoſe Unbelievers in the World that are elected, though I would not exclude the other, but thoſe eſpecially that are elected, and ſhall be brought on through conviction and converſion to ſalvation; for Chriſt doth ſpeak theſe Words by way of Comfort to the Diſciples, that the Spirit ſhall come and aſſiſt them in their Miniſtry; it is ſome comfort indeed if any be convinced, but that is not ſo much comfort as to be convinced and effectually wrought upon to ſalvation, and this comfort Chriſt doth hold forth as an Antidote againſt their ſadneſs and ſorrow, upon his going away. And then he ſhall convince the World of Sin, of Righteouſneſs, and of Judgment.

I ſhall not now come to ſpeak particularly, to open

open these in particular to you, but only thus much in short to shew you how the World was convinced by the Apostles Ministry, immediately after Christs Ascension into Heaven, the World was then convinced; the World of the unbelieving Jews was convinced of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment. Look but into that Sermon, *Acts* 2. which was preached upon the occasion of the falling down of the Holy Ghost, the coming of the Comforter, which Christ promiseth here; you shall see there how the Jews were convinced, both of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment, by the coming of the Holy Ghost upon them in that very Sermon, *verse* 23. There he convinces them of Sin, *In murdering and crucifying the Lord of Glory*; they were so far from believing on Christ as their Saviour, that they did murder him; whereas, saith the Apostle in another place, *If so be they had known*, and so believed in Christ, *they would not have crucifyed the Lord of Glory*; but saith he, *Him being delivered by the determinate Counsel of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucifyed and slain.* He tells them plainly that they were guilty of murdering the Son of God, and they were so convinced at this Word, that they did not gainsay it, but were pricked in their hearts; thus they were convinced of Sin, that they did not believe in Christ, but instead of believing they murdered him: and then they were convinced also of Righteousness, namely, of Christs Righteousness, that Christ was a Righteous Person whom they crucifyed and slew, *verse* 22. *Ye Men of Israel, hear these words, Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God, by Signs and Wonders*

Wonders and Miracles, which God did by him in the midſt of you, as your ſelves know; the Apoſtle here holds forth that he was a Righteous Perſon, and they crucifyed a Righteous Perſon, and what had they to ſay againſt this? No, they were ſilent, they laid their hands upon their mouth, and afterwards their hands come upon their heart, and they were pricked at the heart, and now they were convinced of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt; and alſo of Judgment, that now God had given all power to execute Judgment, into the hand of Chriſt, unto this Son of man whom they crucified, and ſlew. So *verſe* 24. *Whom God hath raiſed up, having looſed the pains of death, becauſe it was not poſſible that he ſhould be holden of it; he overcame Death, and overcame the Devil that had the power of Death*; and at *Verſe* 31. he ſeeing this before, ſpake of the Reſurrection of Chriſt, that his Soul was not left in Hell, *This Jeſus hath God raiſed up, whereof we all are witneſſes*; Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt — having received all Power and Authority, and Dominion, and Government, over all Principalities and Powers, *&c.* By this means he convinced them of Judgment; *for the Prince of this World is judged*, Chriſt is exalted at the Right hand of God, and they had nothing to ſay againſt what the Apoſtle ſpake, but their hearts were pricked, and now, *Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do to be ſaved?*

Thus you ſee the intendment and ſcope of Chriſt in theſe Words, is to comfort the Hearts of his Diſciples againſt his going away, and now ſaith Chriſt, *I will ſend the Comforter unto you*: and when

when he is come he shall so assist you in your Ministry, that you shall be able to *Convince the World of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment*; your Ministry shall be made effectual, operative, and saving; and this he delivereth as an Antidote against their sorrow for his going away from them. And here is the Point that I shall briefly take up to speak to at this present, if the Lord please.

Doct. *That it is a matter of unspeakable Joy and Consolation unto the faithful Servants of Christ, that their Ministry is made effectual through the power of the Spirit of Christ for the saving of poor Souls.*

Christ gives them this very thing as an Antidote, as a Comfort and Cordial against their sorrow which their hearts are filled with for his going away from them, saith he, the Comforter shall come to you, and be with your Ministry, and make your Ministry effectual and powerful and saving to the Souls of many persons in the World, and this he gives as an Antidote against their sorrow. And truly I might have said it is a matter of the greatest Comfort that any thing in the World can afford to the faithful Servants of Christ that their Ministry is made effectual to the furtherance of the Salvation of Souls; he speaks of it you see, as a Comfort suitable to their sorrow, that is able to weigh down their sorrow, that though they were so filled with sorrow at Christs departure from them, yet saith Christ, you shall have that, that is as comfortable to you as my bodily

presence

preſence can be, you ſhall have the co-working of the Spirit with you in your Miniſtry to make it effectual for the furtherance of the ſalvation of poor Souls.

For the opening of this Point I ſhall ſpeak to theſe four things that are implyed and wrapt up in it.

1. That the Miniſtry of the Goſpel is the Means of the converſion and ſalvation of Souls. This is implyed here, They ſhall go out to preach, and this ſhould be for their Comfort, that they ſhould be inſtrumental for the converſion and ſalvation of Souls.

2. That it is through the power of the Spirit, that the Miniſtry of the Goſpel comes to be effectual for the converſion and ſalvation of Souls. Therefore ſaith Chriſt, *I will ſend the Comforter to you, the Holy Ghoſt, and he ſhall convince the World of Sin*, he ſhall make the Word that you preach efficacious to further the ſalvation of Souls.

3. That as the Miniſtry of the Goſpel alone of it ſelf cannot, ſo neither will the Holy Ghoſt work efficaciouſly and ſavingly to the converſion and ſalvation of Souls without the Miniſtry of the Goſpel. Chriſt doth not ſay the Spirit alone ſhall work effectually, and convertingly, and ſavingly, no, but with your Miniſtry. It was therefore ſpoken for their Comfort, the Spirit ſhall come along with your Miniſtry, and ſhall work effectually, and convincingly, and ſavingly.

4. It is matter of exceeding great and unſpeakable Conſolation and Joy to the faithful Servants of Chriſt, that their Miniſtery through the Operation of the Spirit is made efficacious and effectual

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for the convincing and converting and saving of any Soul. Briefly to run over these things.

1. *That the Ministration of the Gospel is the ordinary Means of the Conversion and Salvation of Souls.* And therefore hence it is that the Gospel is called sometimes the Word of Salvation, *Acts* 13.26. *To you is this Word of Salvation sent*; the Word of Salvation, that is the Gospel; and sometimes 'tis called the Gospel of Salvation, *Ephes.* 1. 13. *The Gospel of your Salvation*, saith he; and sometimes 'tis called Salvation it self, *Heb.* 2.3. *How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?* If we neglect the Gospel we cannot escape damnation: The Gospel is called Salvation, because 'tis the Instrument and the means of conversion and salvation. And hence it is that people are said to be begotten and born again unto God by the Gospel. Saith *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, 1 *Cor.* 4.15. *Though you have ten thousand Instructors in Christ, yet you have not many Fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel*; I have begotten you, saith he, to be Children of God by the Gospel. So *Paul* writing to *Philemon* concerning *Onesimus*, at the 10*th verse*, saith he, *Receive him, for I have begotten him in my bonds. Paul* was then a prisoner, and *Onesimus* ran away from his Master *Philemon*, and came to *Paul*, and he was an instrument to beget him again to God by the Gospel; so saith the Apostle to the *Corinthians*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 1, 2. *The Gospel by which you are saved* — And so the Apostle *James* calls it *the Word of Truth, whereby Souls are begotten to God, Cap.* 1. 8. And so *Peter* also, saith, *Ye are born again by the incorruptible seed, the Word*, namely, the Word of the Gospel. So that the

Holy

Holy Ghoſt doth teſtify to us that the Goſpel is the Means of the Converſion and Salvation of Souls.

Queſtion.

And why ſo I pray? Whence is the Goſpel, the means of the Converſion and Salvation of Souls?

Anſwer.

In a word, it is from hence, namely, Becauſe God hath ſo ordained it and appointed it; *It pleaſed God*, ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. *by the fooliſhneſs of Preaching, to ſave thoſe that believe.* God hath appointed and ordained the Goſpel, and the preaching of it, to be a means for the Converſion and Salvation of Souls; *It pleaſed God by the fooliſhneſs of Preaching*, not that the Apoſtle calls it fooliſhneſs, but he ſpeaks after the manner of the World, after the account and eſteem that the World had of the preaching of the Goſpel: As now, Cannot we as well read a Chapter at home, and edify our ſelves at home by reading of a Chapter, or reading ſome good Sermons, better than we can Hear? And therefore is it not a ſimple, weak, fooliſh thing for us to ſpend our time ſo? But, ſaith the Apoſtle, count it fooliſhneſs if you will, It pleaſed God to ordain by this way of fooliſhneſs as the World counts it; *It pleaſed God by the fooliſhneſs of Preaching to ſave them that believe*; 'Tis that that God ordains, and appoints, and inſtitutes for that end, and that's the reaſon it is a means of Converſion and Salvation, though it be a fooliſh thing to carnal reaſon to come and hear a man ſpeak a little time, and think this to be a means of Converſion and Salvation; but though it be ſo fooliſh a thing,

yet this is the way and means that God hath appointed whereby Souls should be converted and saved.

Question.

But, I pray, How is the Ministry of the Gospel a Means of Conversion and Salvation?

Answer.

Briefly; for I must not inlarge, *The Gospel is a Means of Conversion and Salvation* (namely) *partly by discovering or convincing People where they are out of the way of Salvation*; as in the Text, *I will send the Comforter, and he shall convince the World of Sin*, of their sinful Estate, and how they are out of the Way of Salvation, and doth discover and convince them, and shew them the right way; and also the Gospel is a means to open and enlighten the Understandings of People, to open their blind Eyes; as Christ told *Paul*, when he sent him to preach the Gospel, *Acts* 26. 18. *To*, saith he, *I have sent thee to open the Eyes of them that are blind, and to turn them from Darkness to Light*; that is, by the Ministry of the Gospel. The Gospel is a Means to open peoples Eyes, to turn them from Darkness to Light, to make them see that they are in a state of Darkness, to make them see that there is a glorious Light held forth in the Gospel: as the Apostle speaks, 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. *Who hath called you out of Darkness into his marvelous Light*; This is that the Gospel is a Means of, and so it brings to a state of Salvation. And again, the Gospel is a Means to deliver people from the power of the Devil; every one naturally is in the power of Satan, he rules and works in

in all the Children of Unbelief; Now the Goſpel is a means to bring Souls from under the power of Satan; and ſo Chriſt told *Paul* in that 26th of *Acts*, *I have ſent thee* (ſaith he) *to turn them from Darkneſs to Light, and from the power of Satan to God.* The Goſpel is a Means of that; therefore ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. *The Weapons of our Warfare are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of ſtrong holds,* to beat down the Batteries, and Caſtles, and Fortifications that Satan builds; it is mighty to pull down the power of Satan, and ſo by that means to bring a Soul into a State of Converſion and Salvation. And alſo the Goſpel is the Means to work faith in the heart, to cauſe a Soul to believe on Chriſt, 'tis a means of that, and ſo by that means the Soul comes to be juſtified, and freed from the guilt of Sin. *Faith*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God, Rom.* 10. 17. Faith cometh by hearing the Goſpel preached; God is pleaſed to make uſe of the preaching of the Goſpel to work Faith in the Souls of poor Sinners, and by working Faith in their Souls, drawing them unto Chriſt: Now by believing in Chriſt they come to have remiſſion of Sins, as Chriſt told *Paul* in that of the *Acts*, *To turn them from Darkneſs to Light, from the power of Satan to God, that they might receive Forgiveneſs of Sins, and an inheritance among them that are ſanctified*, and all by Faith in Chriſt: So that I ſay, the Goſpel is the means ordained and appointed of God for the Salvation of Souls; and therefore let no body think that the Miniſtry of the Goſpel is a needleſs thing, as many are ready to think

in their minds, that of all the Callings in the World the Miniſtry of the Goſpel may be beſt ſpared. Truly, if ſo be that the Salvation of Souls be not neceſſary, then the Calling of Miniſters to their Office, and their preaching of the Goſpel, may be ſpared, but you ſee Chriſt hath appointed it to be the means of Converſion and Salvation; and therefore, whatever people may think ſecretly in their minds that we may edifie our ſelves by reading a Chapter, and meditating upon it, by reading of good Books, and what need we to trouble our ſelves to wait upon the Miniſtry of the Goſpel? Truly know this, *That the Fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer than the Wiſdom of Man*: God hath pleaſed to ordain and appoint the Miniſtry of the Goſpel to be the means of Converſion and Salvation, and therefore if the Converſion of Souls be neceſſary, then the preaching of the Goſpel is neceſſary; therefore let us take heed we do not neglect attending upon the Goſpel, and the preaching of the Goſpel as we would be loth to neglect our own Salvation. That is the firſt, That the Goſpel is the Means of working a ſaving and converting Work upon the Souls of Men.

2. The ſecond is, *That the Goſpel alone of it ſelf cannot work a ſaving and converting Work upon any Soul*; no, *there muſt be the Operation of the Spirit of Chriſt, that muſt go along with the Goſpel*, or elſe the Goſpel will never be able to work any ſaving converting Work upon any Soul; 'tis true indeed, the Goſpel is the Word of Salvation; Ay, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 1. 16. *It is the Power of God to Salvation*; Ay, where

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the power of God goeth along with it, it works Salvation by the power of the Spirit of God, 1 *Cor.* 13. 4. *The Weapons of our Warfare are mighty through God*, ſaith the Apoſtle; not mighty in themſelves. The Weapons of our Warfare, what is that? The Miniſtry of the Goſpel, the Preaching of the Goſpel is mighty, but it is mighty through God to the pulling down of Strong Holds. Alas! of it ſelf it cannot, the Goſpel of it ſelf is but a weak Letter; but where the Power of the Spirit goes along with it, it is mighty, mighty through God, mighty to convince, and mighty to convert, and mighty to ſave; therefore the Goſpel is compared to a Sword, and it is called the Sword of the Spirit, *Eph.*6.17. *Take to you the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God*; It is a Sword that cannot do good, except it be wielded by the hand of the Spirit of God: It is not now as a natural cauſe to effect any thing; as now our Food is a natural cauſe, ſanctified and ordained by God as a natural cauſe of nouriſhment. Phyſick is ordained as a natural Cauſe of health; but 'tis not ſo with the Word, the Miniſtry of the Word is but as a Tool or Inſtrument in a Workmans hand, in a Carpenter or Joyners hand; the Tool of it ſelf cannot work, the Word of it ſelf cannot work, but as it is in the Workmans hand, ſo it works. Truly ſo, the Sword of the Spirit, in the hand of the Spirit, that will work to the convincing and converting, and ſaving of a Soul, otherwiſe it cannot do it; no, it is but weak in it ſelf; even as a Sword that cannot move or lift up it ſelf: but now in the hand of the Spirit

the Spirit, the Goſpel is mighty to open the underſtanding, to open the heart. We read the heart of *Lydia* was opened when ſhe heard *Paul* preach, but it was not *Paul's* preaching, but the Spirits going along with it, that did open her heart, and ſhe attended to what was ſpoken by *Paul*; and ſo the Spirit with the Word is mighty to draw a Soul to Chriſt, not the Word alone; no, ſaith Chriſt, *John* 5.44, 45. *No man can come unto me, except the Father draw him*; that is, there muſt be the mighty Power of the Spirit of God concurring, to work with the Word, to draw and perſwade and convince by the Word, and then it works. And ſo the Spirit with the Word will cauſe a Soul to grow and encreaſe in a Spiritual Eſtate. *Paul* may plant, and *Apollos* may water, but it is the Lord muſt give the encreaſe to make the growth. So it is, one may preach, and another may preach, but ſtill there muſt be the concurrance and work of the Spirit, or elſe all our preaching will be but like the watering of a dead plant; but the *S*pirit of the Lord muſt come and be preſent, and then our preaching, our planting and watering may be bleſſed for thoſe ends for which God hath appointed it: And the reaſon is this, That without the Spirit of God, the Word, though it be ordained of God to be a Means of Converſion and Salvation, yet the Word alone without the Spirit cannot do it, becauſe the Miniſtry of the Word is too weak to make an Impreſſion upon our hard hearts.

Take a Seal, and ſet it upon a Rock or Stone, it makes no Impreſſion, Why? Becauſe there is

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no pliableneſs in the Rock or Stone to receive the Impreſſion: Thus it is with our hearts; our hearts are naturally like ſo many Stones; therefore ſee what the Lord promiſes, *To take away the heart of Stone, and to give a heart of Fleſh*; a ſoft heart, tho hardneſs of it ſhall be taken away; that when the Word comes as a Seal to make an Impreſſion upon the heart, the Spirit doth change the heart, and makes it pliable to receive the Impreſſion, which othewiſe it could not do. You may as well make an Impreſſion upon a Rock or Stone, as upon any Heart, till the Spirit come and ſoften the heart, and make it pliable to receive the impreſſion of the Word; and therefore hence you may obſerve, That ſometimes, when divers hear the ſame Word preached, there are diverſity of effects in the ſame hearers hearing the ſame Word, ſome are converted, and others not; ſome believe, and others not. As *Acts* 17. When *Paul* had been preaching to them, *Verſe* 32, 34. *When they heard of the Reſurrection of the dead, ſome mocked, and others ſaid, We will hear thee again of this matter: Howbeit certain clave to him, and believed.* Ay, ſome received the Goſpel, and others not; ſome believed, and others not.

As I remember, 'tis ſaid, *Acts* 28. 24. *Some believed the things that were ſpoken, and ſome believed not*; And, What is the Reaſon? The Spirit doth work effectually with the Goſpel upon ſome hearts, but not upon others; that is the reaſon that ſome believed, and ſome believed not. And hence it is again, that ſometimes ſome are more hardned by the very word of the Goſpel: So far from being converted and brought into a ſtate of Salvation,

that they are more hardned and set further off, nearer to their damnation. What is the reason? Because there wants the presence of the Spirit, and therefore you shall see *Isa.* 6. 9. saith the Lord to the Prophet (he was an Evangelical Prophet) *Go*, (saith the Lord) *make this peoples heart hard*, go and harden their hearts, that they may hear, and not understand, that they may not be converted and saved; Let their hearts be more hardned, saith God, by hearing the Gospel preached? May sometimes, what is the reason that the most eminent ablest Preacher of the Gospel in the World, that their Ministry is sometimes less efficacious than the Ministry of them that are far inferiour to them? what is the reason? Because the Concurrence of the Spirit goeth along with the one and not with the other. You shall see Christ himself, the most eminent Preacher that ever was under Heaven, *John* 12. 36. 37. He preaches there, and though he did Miracles before them, yet they believed not on him; that the saying of *Isaiah* the Prophet might be fulfilled, *Lord, who hath believed our Report? and to whom hath the Arm of the Lord been revealed*; And therefore they could not believe, because, *Isaiah* saith again, *He hath blinded their Eyes, and hardned their hearts* — These things, said *Isaiah*, when he saw his glory and spake of him; when he saw the glory of Christ, when he was most Evangelical in his Ministry; then he spake these Words, whereas *Peter* now, that was far inferiour to Christ, having the presence of the Spirit mightily poured down upon him, *Acts* 2. (where the Holy Ghost fell down upon the Apostles like so many fiery cloven tongues)

tongues.) *Peter* preached to them, and he converted three thouſand Souls at one Clap, becauſe of the powerful preſence of the Spirit together with the Word. Therefore, Brethren, ſtill let us not ſatisfy our ſelves with hearing the Goſpel preached, though we had the moſt eminent preacher that ever was in the World, though we ſhould have heard Chriſt himſelf, but look for the Concurrence of the Spirit, the breathings of the Spirit, wait upon God for the communicating and giving out of his Spirit, that they may make the Goſpel to be the Miniſtration, not of the Letter, but of the Spirit, for it is the Spirits Work to make the Goſpel effectual and operative for the Converſion and Salvation of Souls.

3. In a Word, that, *As the Preaching of the Goſpel of it ſelf cannot convert or ſave any Soul, So neither will the Holy Ghoſt without the Concurrence and preaching of the Goſpel.* You heard before that the Preaching of the Goſpel cannot do it alone; But cannot the Spirit? will not the Spirit do it alone? It can do it alone indeed, But mark I pray, the Spirit will *not ordinarily* convince and convert effectually and ſavingly any Soul without the Miniſtration of the Goſpel: To give you but a Scripture or two for this, *Acts 9.* You ſee there Chriſt himſelf ſpeaks to *Paul*; you know how he met with him as he was going to *Damaſcus*, to perſecute the Saints, and Chriſt ſpake immediately to him, *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me?* well, *who art thou, Lord?* ſaith he; *I am Jeſus, whom thou perſecuteſt*; Well, *Verſe 6.* You ſhall ſee, ſaith *Paul, Lord, What wouldeſt thou have me to do?* Mark now, Chriſt

Chriſt doth not preach the Goſpel immediately himſelf, but he ſends him to one to preach to him; *Go into* Damaſcus, *and there it ſhall be told thee what thou ſhalt do*; and there Chriſt ſent *Ananias* to preach the Goſpel to him; Chriſt himſelf would not preach the Goſpel from Heaven to him, nor he would not convert nor ſave his Soul without the Miniſtration of the Goſpel. And look into *Acts* 10. See there concerning *Cornelius*, there was an Angel from Heaven ſent to him, he had been faſting and praying, and that hour there came an Angel of God to him to tell him that God had heard his Prayers, and accepted his Alms, but why may not the Angel preach the Goſpel immediately? No, the Lord would have the Goſpel diſpenſed in an ordinary way of preaching, not by an Angel from Heaven, therefore *Verſe* 5. *And now ſend men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whoſe Surname is Peter, and he ſhall tell thee words whereby thou and thy houſe ſhall be ſaved*, he ſhall preach the Goſpel effectually to you; and you ſhall ſee afterwards, *Verſe* 33. *Immediately therefore I ſent to thee, and thou haſt done well that thou art come: now therefore are we all here preſent before God to hear thee*; and *Verſe* 44. *Whileſt Peter ſpake theſe Words, the Holy Ghoſt fell on all them which heard the Word.* Why did not the Angel himſelf preach the Goſpel to *Cornelius*? Why was not he an Inſtrument of his Converſion and Salvation? no, the Holy Ghoſt will not work alone without the ordinary concurrence of the Miniſtration of the Goſpel, and therefore look at it as a deluſion of Satan, if ſo be that upon any pretence whatſoever, any ſhall endeavour to take

you

you off from attending upon the Miniſtry of the Goſpel upon pretence of the Spirit, that the Spirit ſhall anoint us and teach us all things—. Well, look upon it as a Deluſion of Satan, if it be to take you off from attending upon the Miniſtery of the Goſpel which is the ordinary way that God hath appointed; and take this for an univerſal Rule, That whatever it be that tends to take any people off from any Ordinance of God, or any Inſtitution of God, look at it as a deluſion of Satan, let it be under any pretence whatſoever; as now, to take one off from Duties and Ordinances, to wait till the Spirit come immediately to inſpire—look upon it as a Deluſion, becauſe it tends to take you off from the ordinary Inſtitutions that God hath appointed. So, you ſee the Goſpel is the Means of Converſion and Salvation, the Goſpel without the Spirit cannot do it, and the Spirit without the Goſpel will not do it.

4. The fourth thing is this, *That it is a matter of unſpeakable Joy and Conſolation to the faithfull Servants of Chriſt, that their diſpenſing of the Goſpel through the Concurrence of the Spirit is made effectual for the Converſion and Salvation of any Soul.* Ay, ſaith Chriſt here; this ſhall be inſtead of my bodily preſence with you, and it ſhall be as comfortable to you. You are now troubled and ſorrowful becauſe I am going away from you, but I will ſend the Comforter to you, and the Comforter ſhall aſſiſt you in your Miniſtry, and make it ſucceſsful to convince and convert and ſave Souls, and Chriſt would have them, to look upon it as equivalent to his own bodily preſence, and would be matter of greater Joy and Conſolation to them.

Look

Look into *Verſe* 12, 22 of this Chapter, ſaith Chriſt, *You are now ſad and ſorrowful, but I tell you,* (ſaith He) *the time is coming that your ſorrows ſhall be forgotten*: The ſorrows that you have upon my departure ſhall be forgotten, they ſhall be ſwallowed up with Joy and Conſolation: Look, ſaith he, as it is with a Woman when ſhe draweth near the time of her Travail, when her pains begin to come upon her, then ſhe is ſad and ſorrowful, but, ſaith he, when ſhe is delivered, ſhe forgetteth her ſorrow, for Joy that a man-child is born —: ſo ſhall it be with you. Thus Chriſt comforts his Diſciples againſt his going away, they ſhould have ſuch matter of rejoycing that ſhould ſwallow up all their ſorrows, they ſhould have the preſence of the Spirit, and their Miniſtry ſhould be efficacious and ſucceſsful for the converting of Souls, and Chriſt did ſpeak it from his own experience, *John* 4. When he was ſpeaking to the Woman of *Samaria*, he ſent his Diſciples into the City to buy food, for he was hungry, and when he ſat down weary on the Well, he asked a little water of the woman, and ſo fell a diſcourſing and convincing of the woman that ſhe lived in Adultery, and converted the woman, and when his Diſciples came, *Maſter*, ſay they, *here is meat to eat*: *Meat*, ſaith he, *I have that which is better than meat, I have meat to eat which you know not of; my Meat is to do the Will of my Father*; here is my joy and rejoycing to convert Souls. Meat is matter of great joy to an hungry man, if you give him all the World, if he have not meat it is nothing; ſaith Chriſt, I take more joy and delight in converting of Souls,

than

than I do in eating when I am an hungry. And you ſhall ſee how the Apoſtle *Paul* doth rejoyce in this, that he was an Inſtrument in converting and ſaving of Souls, he writing to the *Theſſalonians*, 1 Epiſt. 2. 19,20. *For what is our Joy, or Hope, or Crown of rejoycing? are not even ye in the preſence of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt at his coming? for ye are our Glory and our Joy*; ye (ſaith he) are the Top of my Joy, the Crown of my Joy; *Paul* had been an Inſtrument to convert them by the preaching of the Goſpel, and, ſaith he, ye are the top of my glory and rejoycing; So, 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 13, 14. *We are bound to give God thanks always for you, my Brethren, and Beloved in the Lord; becauſe God hath from the beginning choſen you unto Salvation, through the Sanctification of the Spirit, and Belief of the Truth, whereunto he called you by my Goſpel, to the obtaining the Glory of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*: Saith he, we are always bound to give thanks to God for you; Ay, here is matter of Joy and Rejoycing. And truly ſo, though *Paul* did meet with Afflictions, Tribulations, and Perſecutions for preaching of the Goſpel, yet notwithſtanding he made nothing of all his troubles, ſufferings and ſorrows, in regard he did but finiſh his Courſe with Joy. If he have but this Joy and Conſolation, I care not, ſaith he, what troubles or afflictions do abide me, *Acts* 20. 24. *The Holy Ghoſt witneſſeth in every City, that bonds and afflictions abide me; but none of theſe things move me, neither count I my life dear unto my ſelf, ſo that I may finiſh my Courſe with Joy, and the Miniſtry which I have received of the Lord Jeſus.* If I can but preach the Goſpel, ſaith he, and be an Inſtrumen-

ment to convert Souls, this is the Joy of my heart, let my life go for it. And it is a very high expreſſion which the Apoſtle *John* hath *Epiſt.* 3. *Verſe* 4. ſaith he there, *I have no greater joy*, (mark) the Apoſtle *John* that had ſuch Communion with Chriſt; Yet ſaith he, *I have no greater joy than to hear that my Children walk in the Truth*; Thoſe that he had been a means and Inſtrument to convert by his preaching, now to ſee that their converſion was true and real by their continuing in the truth: I have no greater Joy in this world, ſaith he; And why ſo, I pray? Why ſhould this be ſuch a matter of Joy and rejoycing to the hearts of the faithful Servants that their Miniſtry is made effectual for the Converſion of Souls?

1. Upon this Account, becauſe, *Here is a Sign and Token that God hath bleſſed their Miniſtry*, that the Bleſſing of God from Heaven hath been upon their labours: and I pray let me appeal to your ſelves, is it not matter of Comfort Joy and Rejoycing to you that you find your labours and indeavours to have any Succeſs, to be bleſſed of God? As now, take a Nurſe that brings up a Child, and ſhe ſees the child begins to thrive by her ſuckling of it, and it is the Joy and Rejoycing of her heart; as on the other ſide, if ſhe ſee the Child pine away, and doth not proſper, 'tis the grief of her heart, when ſhe takes all this pains and no good comes of it. When you plant and ſow ſeed, if you take any pains in your Orchard or Garden in grafting and the like, and you find that your labour is made fruitful, is it not a Comfort to you to go into your Garden, and ſee the ſeed that you have ſown flouriſh and come up? It is rejoycing

to

to you; and much more is it to the hearts of the faithful Servants of Chriſt that their labours in the Miniſtry are bleſſed and made fruitful and ſucceſsful; becauſe now here is the more immediate preſence of God upon their labours, here is the bleſſing, the bleſſing of God doth more immediately appear in their labours. Now in ſowing of Seed there is inſtrumental means and cauſes of its growing, there is Dew, and Showers, and Rain from Heaven, there is the influence of the Sun, the fatneſs of the Soil, that concur to cauſe it grow; but now there is much againſt the Miniſtry of the Word to work upon the heart; there is the corruption of the heart, and the temptations of Satan and the World, and all to hinder the Goſpel from taking effect, but now when the Lord makes the Goſpel to take effect, to become efficacious to the Converſion of Souls, of poor Creatures, here is now the bleſſing of Heauen upon his labours, and now he hath cauſe to rejoyce greatly that God is with him, and hath bleſſed his labours, and now God doth own him as a Fellow-Labourer together with himſelf, *We are Workers together with God*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *We are Gods Husband men*, and we are planting for God, and God goes along with us and co-operates with us; what a mighty cauſe of rejoycing is this? that we have the preſence of God with us, and the bleſſing of God upon us; nay, it is an argument and token that God owns their Miniſtry and labour, and he ſeals their Miniſtry and Labour, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Ye are the Seal of our Miniſtry*; this is I ſay matter of great Joy and Conſolation in regard it is a Sign

and

and Token that God hath blessed the Labours of his Servants, and owned their Ministry.

2. 'Tis a matter of great Joy and Consolation, because now, *Here is a Testimony that Jesus Christ in Heaven and in his Glory is mindful of his poor Servants here below in the World, he doth mind and remember such a poor Servant of his, that labours in his Name, and doth send down the Spirit to accompany him in his Labours*; as Christ said here to his Disciples, *I will send the Comforter and he shall assist you*, and I will remember you, when I am in Heaven, I will not forget you. Thus Christ now sends down the Comforter, the Spirit from Heaven to assist such a poor Minister in his labours and endeavours; what matter of Consolation is this to think that Christ from Heaven sends down his Spirit to co-operate with him in his indeavours? What matter of Joy and Consolation is this? Take but one more.

3. *It must needs be matter of great Joy and Consolation to the faithful Servants of Christ, to think that the Lord should please to make use of such as they are to be Instruments in his hands to pull down the Kingdome of the Devil, and to inlarge the Kingdom of Christ*; That the Devils Kingdom and power should go down, and that Souls should be drawn out of his Kingdom by the Labours of his poor Servants, what Joy is this? When Christ sent his Disciples to preach, *Luke* 10.17,18 it is said, *They returned again rejoycing*, saying, *The Devils are subject to us*: Ay, saith Christ, I beheld Satan fall down from Heaven like Lightning. Where the Gospel comes, there goes such a Presence of the Spirit with the preaching thereof

that

that Sathan goes down, and poor Souls are brought out from under his power and Dominion; as you know Chriſt told *Paul*, that he ſhould be inſtrumental to turn people from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan to God; though they be under the Kingdom and Power of the Devil, yet by the preaching of the Goſpel, when the Spirit concurs and goes along with it, poor Souls are tranſlated from the Kingdom of Satan into the Kingdom of his dear Son, *Col.* 1. 15. Now what Joy and Comfort muſt this needs be to the hearts of the faithful Servants of Chriſt? that the Lord ſhould pleaſe to make them Inſtruments in his own hands to pull down the Kingdom of the Devil and to inlarge his own Kingdom, that ſuch ſhall be added to the Lord as ſhall be ſaved? I ſay it muſt needs be matter of Joy and Rejoycing: But I would haſten to an end. Briefly therefore by way of Application.

Application. And here I might in the firſt place take occaſion to ſpeak a Word of Direction to the Miniſters of Chriſt, if it were a fit place and ſeaſon, namely, to direct us how we may ſo preach that we may have moſt Joy and Conſolation. *The faithfull Servants of Chriſt have more Joy and Conſolation by being inſtrumental for the Converſion and Salvation of Souls, than by all that ever the People of their Congregation can do for them*; If they may be inſtrumental in the Lords hand for their Converſion and Salvation, this is more Joy and Conſolation to them, than any thing in the World can be. Chriſt tells his Diſciples that this would be matter of Joy and Rejoycing to their Hearts when he was gone from them,

therefore we ſhould ſeek to convert and ſave Souls, we ſhould do, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *I ſeek not yours, but you*; we ſhould ſeek the Converſion and Salvation of Souls, and therefore we ſhould be preaching of Faith and of Repentance, as the Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith of himſelf, *Faith in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and Repentance towards God, whereby poor Souls may be converted and ſaved*: And we had need be much in pleading with God for the Spirit, that the Spirit of the Lord may go along with our Miniſtry: Our Sermons had need to be watered and ſoaked in earneſt prayer for the Spirit.

2. Here is now a mighty Word of Encouragement unto poor Souls to be ready to entertain and receive the Goſpel, and the Miniſtration of it; to be ready ſo to receive it into your hearts as it may be a good Word of Converſion and Salvation to your Souls. Ay, this would be matter of Joy and Rejoycing to the Servants of Chriſt more than all that ever you can do for them, if they may be but inſtrumental for the Converſion and Salvation of your Souls, it will be more Comfort and Joy to them than all the World beſides; Joy to them, Ay, it will be Joy to the very Angels in Heaven, *Luk.* 15.10,11. *There ſhall be Joy in Heaven over one Sinner that repents* — The Angels of Heaven obſerve how you come into the Congregation, they obſerve your Carriage, and how you take the Word, and what impreſſion it makes upon your hearts to Conviction and Converſion, and Salvation, it is the Joy and Rejoycing of the Angels in Heaven to ſee a poor Soul brought in by the Miniſtry of the Goſpel; and do not you think, you your ſelves will have as much cauſe of Joy

and Rejoycing? Whereas on the other ſide, if ſo be the poor Servants of Chriſt do come and take pains; they ſtudy, and labour, and hold forth the Word of the Goſpel to you, and people come and receive it into their ears, and not into their hearts; no good done upon them, but they remain as carnal, as worldly and unbelieving as before, and they ſee no fruit of their Miniſtry; this is the grief of their hearts and Souls, they labour and labour and queſtion whether the Lord doth own their Miniſtry or no; they have cauſe to complain as the Prophet *Iſa.* 49.6. *I have laboured in vain, I have ſpent my Strength for naught and in vain.* So the poor Servants of Chriſt go with a dead heart into their Studies, and come to preach with a ſad heart, when they ſee no good done, no ſaving Work wrought; this is a very Cut to their hearts and Souls, and they would rather (if they might have their wills) ceaſe mentioning of the Name of Chriſt to people. Therefore let it be the deſire, and endeavour, and care of people ſo to hear and receive the Word into their hearts that it may become effectual, and an Inſtrument in the Lords hand for the Converſion and Salvation of their Souls.

Objection.

But you will ſay, *Is it in our power* (I know you think ſo in your hearts) *to make the Word convincing, and converting, and ſaving?*

Anſwer.

I do not ſay 'tis in your power, but thus much

I may say, you may oppose and resist the saving Work of the Gospel upon your hearts; and therefore to be found waiting upon the Lord in his way you cannot tell but the Lord may make the Gospel effectual to you for your Conversion and Salvation. And therefore let me commend three or four Words by way of Direction in this case, and so I shall leave all to the blessing of God.

Do you desire to have the Word of God made effectual for the convincing and converting and saving of your Souls? Then

1. *Be much and earnest in praying for the Spirit to go along with the Preaching of the Word into your hearts and Souls*; Ay, pray much for that, O! before you come you should be careful to wrestle with God for the presence of the Spirit to go along. I fear, Brethren, that people are careless in this Point, they come reeking out of the World and from their business, and never wrestle with the Lord for the presence of his Spirit to assist the Preaching of the Word, that it may become effectual and profitable to your Souls, and so you go away as you come. Therefore I say, as the Apostle, *Jude v.* 24. *Be building up your selves in your most holy Faith.* But how shall we build up our selves in our most holy Faith? how shall we do it? why, saith he, *Praying in the Holy Ghost*, that is the way: Beg earnestly for the Spirit, for the Holy Ghost to accompany the Word, and make the Word profitable and effectual to you. That is one Direction, I do but name it, I pray remember it.

2. As we do desire to have the Word made effectual

fectual for Conviction, Converſion, and Salvation to our Souls, *Then attend upon the Preaching of the Goſpel as the Lords Ordinance*, for that very End that he hath appointed it, namely, for Converſion and Salvation. This is the very End for which God hath appointed the Preaching of the Goſpel, to be a ſaving Word, a Word of Salvation to poor Souls, that is the very End of the Goſpel, it is appointed for that End. *Eph.* 4. 11, 12. ſaith the Apoſtle, *Chriſt when he aſcended up on high, he gave Gifts to men*, Miniſterial Gifts, he gave Paſtors, and Teachers, for the edifying of the Body, for the bringing home of Souls to the Body, for the perfecting of the Saints: So that thoſe that are Saints ſhould ſtill attend upon the Goſpel for more edifying, for the ſaving work to be carried on. This is the very Intendment of the Preaching of the Goſpel, God hath ordained it for this end and purpoſe, therefore wait upon it for that end, attend upon it as the Word of God which he hath appointed for that end. 1 *Theſſ.* 2.13. *We are always bound to give thanks to God for you, beloved Brethren, becauſe when you heard the Word, you received it not as the Word of man, but as it is indeed the Word of God, which worketh effectually in them that believe.* Ay, receive it as the Word, and the Word of God, for that End that God hath appointed it, and through the preſence of the Spirit it will become effectual. Mark how it wrought in *Cornelius* and his Family, *Acts* 10. *Cornelius* was directed to ſend for *Peter* to preach to him, and *Cornelius* in the mean time had gathered together the Congregation, his Friends and Relations; he had got them together that they

might hear the Gospel as well as himself; when *Peter* came he preached Christ to them; *Now*, saith *Cornelius*, *we are all here before the Lord, to hear whatever God hath directed thee to speak to us*, we are here to attend upon it as the very Word of God; and *Peter* opened his mouth and preached the Gospel to them, and it is said *The Holy Ghost fell upon them all that heard it*, *v.* 44. and then saith *Peter*, *verse* 47. *Can any man forbid Water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we.* Attending upon the Preaching of the Gospel as Gods Ordinance and Institution, for saving ends and purposes, for Conversion, and Edification, and Salvation; this is the way whereby we may have the Gospel made effectual to us, we shall be brought to receive it, and receiving of it, we shall be brought into a state of Salvation, and further built up in our most holy Faith: That is the second Direction.

3. *Receive the Ministration of the Gospel with humility of Spirit, and meekness*, I say, receive it with all humility and meekness of Spirit, that is the way whereby it may be made effectual to Salvation. When people come and say, they can tell as much as the Minister can tell them, and they had as good stay at home, and read a good Book: and not coming to it as Gods Ordinance, with a teachable frame of Spirit, being willing to hear what the Lord will say, how can the Word become effectual? but now when a Soul comes with meekness of Spirit, to hear what the Lord will say, and then as *Psal.* 25. 9. *The Lord will teach the meek*, and saith the Apostle, *James* 1. 21. *Receive with meekness the ingrafted Word, which*

is

is able to ſave your Souls; receive it with meekneſs, with an humble Spirit, to receive whatſoever the Lord ſhall pleaſe to direct his Servants to ſpeak. And let me add but one thing more, and I will have done, and that is this.

4. *Be careful to receive the Word and Truth in the Love of it, and to mixe it with Faith.* Receive it in the Love of it. Truly, if ſo be we have no Love to the Truth, and the Word, when we come to attend upon it, it may be juſt with God to give us up to believe Lies; as that hath been the very Judgment of God upon the Antichriſtian World for theſe 1290 years together for this very Sin, for not receiving the Truth in the love of it, 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 11,12,13. *Becauſe they received not the Truth in the Love of it, therefore God gave them up to ſtrong deluſions to believe Lies.* And Antichriſt hath prevailed to this Day, upon that very account. Therefore remember, that we be ready *to receive the Truth in the Love of it*, as to ſay, This is a Truth of God, and though I have heard it before, yet it is a Truth, and the Lord would have this Truth ſpoken to me, and I muſt *receive it in the Love of it*, and then mix it with Faith, *Heb.* 4.2. They had the Goſpel preached to them as well as we, and *The Word preached did not profit them that heard it*, why? *becauſe they did not mixe it with Faith in their hearts*; What is this mixing the Word with Faith? Truly, when the Lord perſwades the Heart to receive whatever is ſpoken, as ſpoken from the Lord to me, this Word the Lord dothintend for me, and makes a particular

application of it, this is the proper work of Faith, to apply the word ſpoken to our ſelves, as ſpoken from the Lord to us: And thus the word cometh to be effectual through the Spirit, either in a way of Conviction, or Converſion, or for the Furtherance of the Salvation of the Souls of any. But thus much ſhall ſuffice at this time.

The

The Holy Ghoſt convinceth of Sin.

SERMON IV.

JOHN 16. 9.

Of Sin, becauſe they believe not on me.

YOU have heard the ſcope of theſe words already, which in ſhort is this. Chriſt would here comfort his Diſciples againſt their ſorrow, which they had for his going away from them; *Becauſe I ſaid theſe things unto you,* (ſaith he) *Sorrow hath filled your hearts.* Now Chriſt is ſpeaking here in a way of Comfort, to ſuſtain and ſupport the hearts of his Diſciples againſt that grief and ſorrow that did poſſeſs them; And how doth he comfort them? He tells them, that his ſpiritual preſence ſhall be more advantagious to them than his bodily preſence could be: The preſence of the Spirit which he would ſend to them (ſaith he) he ſhall be a Comforter to you. *If I go away, I will ſend the Comforter to you*; and that ſhall be more than my bodily preſence to you; whereas, *If I go not away, the Comforter will not come.* Ay, but how ſhall the preſence of the Spirit be inſtead of Chriſt's bodily preſence to them, and make up that loſs to them? Chriſt tells them, for that where-

wherein the preſence of the Spirit with them, after his going away, would be equivalent and correſpondent to his own bodily perſonal being with them. But wherein? He tells them, namely, becauſe when the Spirit comes, he ſhall co work with them in their Miniſtry, ſo as their Miniſtry ſhall be made efficacious and effectual to the furtherance of the Salvation of many Souls: The Spirit ſhall go along with their Miniſtry; and this Chriſt gives in by way of Comfort to his Diſciples.

Hence, we Obſerved the laſt time, *That it is matter of exceeding great Joy and Conſolation to the faithful Servants of Chriſt, that through the operation and co-working of the Spirit, their Miniſtry is made effectual for the good of Souls.* This is a great matter of joy and rejoycing; for obſerve it, Chriſt doth lay this down as a comfort to preponderate and out-weigh their ſorrow that they had in their hearts, in reſpect of his going away from them. But I ſhall not ſpeak to any thing that was then ſpoken to.

But ſtill it may be ſaid, *But how ſhall the Spirit concur with our Miniſtry to make it effectual for the Converſion and Salvation of Souls?* Saith Chriſt, *When he is come he ſhall convince the World.* The preſence of the Spirit with your Miniſtry ſhall convince the Men of the world: Convince them, Of what? Now here he tells them.

You heard in the general from the 8*th Verſe*, *He ſhall convince the World of Sin, and of Righteouſneſs, and of Judgement.* But now in theſe 9, 10, and 11 *Verſes*, he comes to ſhew particularly the work of the Spirit in convincing the World, and he gives the

the reaſon of every particular that the Spirit ſhall convince the World of. *Of Sin, Becauſe they believe not in me.* And again, He ſhall convince the world, *of Righteouſneſs*, Why? *Becauſe I go to the Father, and ye ſee me no more*; And again, He ſhall convince the world *of Judgment*, Why? *Becauſe the Prince of this World is judged.*

I ſhall ſpeak only to the firſt of theſe at the preſent through the Lords aſſiſtance.

He ſhall convince the world of Sin; *Of Sin*, and this in order to their Converſion and Salvation, Why? Becauſe Chriſt ſpeaks this by way of Conſolation to the hearts of the Diſciples; now this would be matter of Comfort indeed, that their Miniſtry ſhould be made efficacious for the Converſion and Salvation of Souls; Therefore this convincing the world of Sin, is in order to Salvation.

There are two Points to be ſpoken to from the *Verſe*; But I ſhall only take up one to ſpeak to at preſent through the Lords aſſiſtance, and that is this.

Doctrine.

That it is the firſt work of the Spirit of God in order to the Converſion and Salvation of any Soul, to convince the Soul of Sin.

I ſay, the firſt work of the Spirit of God in order to Convertion and Salvation of Souls, is to convince of Sin. For, here Chriſt ſpeakes of the work of the Spirit, in order to Converſion and Salvation, and, what ſhall he do in order to it? Saith he, He ſhall convince the world of Sin; and this

this shall be the first work that the Spirit shall do. He speaks of convincing *of Righteousness*, and *of Judgement*; but the first work that the Spirit shall do, shall be to convince *of Sin*.

There are four things that are necessary to be spoken to for the opening and clearing of this great Truth and Point.

1. To shew what the convincing work of the Spirit is, what it is for the Spirit to convince a Soul *of Sin*, that we may understand it, and be clear in it; for it is that which is in order to our Conversion and Salvation.

2. Shew you, That the convincing of a Soul of *Sin*, is a necessary work in order to Salvation; for here Christ speaks of the Spirits convincing the Soul of Sin in order to Salvation.

3. That the Convincing of a Soul of Sin, is the work of the Spirit; no less than the work of the Spirit. For, saith Christ, *The Comforter shall come, and when he is come, he shall convince the world of sin.*

4. Shew you, That convincing a Soul *of Sin*, is the first work of the Spirit, in order to the Conversion and Salvation of any Soul.

I suppose I shall not be able to go through all these things at present, but to begin and go as far as we can. Well,

First then, *Let us enquire what is the convincing of Sin, and wherein it lies?* You shall find in Scripture, that this convincing *of Sin*, is set forth by various expressions, sometimes 'tis expressed by *Pricking the heart*, so *Acts* 2. 37. *When they heard this, they were pricked at the heart.* Sometimes it is called *the wounding of the Spirit*, so Prov. 18. 14. Sometimes it is expressed by the *sticking of an Arrow*

Arrow in a mans Spirit, Pſal. 38. 2. *Thy Arrows ſtick faſt in me*, ſaith *David*; which is nothing elſe but the ſenſe of ſin, the guilt of ſin; Sometimes it is expreſſed by *the breaking of Bones, Pſal.* 51.18. *That the Bones which thou haſt broken may rejoyce*; It was upon the Conviction of his ſin of Murder and Adultery. And ſometimes 'tis expreſſed by *the ſmiting of the heart*; as 'tis ſaid of *David*, 1 *Sam.* 24.5. when he had cut off the Skirt of *Saul*'s garment. *His heart ſmote him*, he was convinced of his ſin.

But more particularly, Wherein doth the Conviction of Sin lye? Now you ſhall find that it lies eſpecially in three things, or there are three things in a real convincing of ſin.

1. *The firſt is a ſetting of ſin before the Soul*; the ſetting of it home upon the heart, or the bringing of *Sin* to remembrance: ſetting of it before the Soul, as *David* d th expreſs it, *Pſal.* 51.3. ſaith he, *My ſin is ever before me*, 'tis before my face; he was convinced of his guilt, and then he had ſin ſet before him. So when *Nathan* the Prophet came to *David* to convince him of his *ſin*, when he was impenitent, 2 *Sam.* 12.7. ſee there how *Nathan* the Prophet ſets his *Sin* in order before him, that he might well ſay, *My Sin is always before me.* And *Acts* 2.36,37. *Peter*, to convince the *Jews* of their *ſin*, ſets their *ſin* before them, and tells them what they had done, *They had killed Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God, the Lord of glory*; *and when they heard that, they were pricked at the heart*: So, that it is one thing in Conviction of *Sin*, when the *Spirit* doth convince of *ſin*, he ſets the *ſin* before the Soul, or upon the heart; for if ſo be *ſin*

be

be not set home, and brought before the Soul, there can be no conviction of *sin*.

2. Secondly, There is this further in Conviction of Sin, namely, *Sin is so set home upon the heart, as that the heart is not able to avoid the Conviction*: The heart is not able to shift away from under the power of it, all the shifts and endeavours of the Soul cannot get it off; when the Spirit sets home Sin upon the heart, 'tis so set home, as that the Soul cannot now put it off, it cannot shake it off: the Arrow is so shot, that the Soul cannot wriggle from it. 'Tis true indeed, a guilty Conscience doth not love to be convinced of Sin, and therefore observe it, whenever the Lord goes about to convince of Sin, the Soul doth endeavour all it can to put off the blow, as you shall see now when the Lord came to convince *Adam*, our first Parents of their Sin, *Gen.* 3. 12, 13. They had transgressed and thereupon hid themselves: well, the Lord called for them, *Adam, where art thou?* at last *Adam* appears, and there the Lord to convince him of his Sin, sets his Sin before him; *What hast thou done* (saith God)? *hast thou eaten of the Tree that I forbad thee?* He could not deny it: But, pray, observe what evasions they had, if it were possible, they would avoid the dint of the Conviction; saith *Adam*, 'Tis true, I have eaten of the Tree, but it was by instigation of my Wife, *The Woman which thou gavest me, she gave me of the Tree, and I did eat*; and thus he avoided the power of the Conviction; Well, he goeth to the Woman, and said, *What is this that thou hast done?* and she put it off too; *The Serpent beguiled me, and I did eat*; Thus a guilty

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Conſcience will ſhift off Convictions as long as it can. You ſhall ſee *Aaron*, when *Moſes* was abſent forty days and from the people, *Exod.* 32. 23, 24. *Aaron* and the people made a Golden Calf to worſhip; when *Moſes* came down from the Mount, he fell to expoſtulating with *Aaron* about his Sin; he would convince *Aaron* of his great Sin; ſaith *Moſes*, *What did the people unto thee that thou haſt brought ſo great a Sin upon them?* Now mark, how *Aaron* would avoid the dint of this Conviction: *It is true*, ſaith he, he could not deny the thing, *but let not the anger of my Lord wax hot; thou knoweſt the people, that they are ſet upon miſchief*; it is the peoples fault, ſaith he, *for they ſaid, make us Gods that they may go before us, for as for this Moſes we know not what is become of him. And I ſaid unto them, whoſoever hath any Gold, let them break it off: ſo they gave it me: then I caſt it into the Fire, and there came out this Calf.* What a pitiful excuſe was here? he did but throw it into the fire and there came out a Calf; See what ſhifts Good men will have ſometimes (for *Aaron* wa a good man) to put off the power and force of Conviction.

You ſhall ſee another Inſtance in *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 15.9. There God had ſent *Saul* to cut off all the *Amalekites*, Men, Women, and Children, and Cattel and all, *Spare none, ſaith God*: Well, God gave him victory over the *Amalekites* and he made a great ſlaughter indeed, but *Saul* ſpared *Agag* the King, and ſome of the beſt of the Cattel, at the 13*th Verſe*, *And Samuel came to Saul, and Saul ſaid unto him, Bleſſed be thou of the Lord I have performed the Commandment of the Lord*: The Lord knows

knows, ſaith he, I have done the will and Commandment of the Lord, he would not be convinced at firſt; well, ſaith *Samuel*, to convince him, *Verſe* 14. *What meaneth then the bleating of the Sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the Oxen, which I hear?* Well, *Saul* could not deny but there was ſome of the Oxen ſpared, and the beſt of the Cattel ſpared, but he had his excuſe for that, *verſe* 15. *The People* (ſaid he) *ſpared the beſt of the Sheep, and of the Oxen, to ſacrifice unto the Lord*: Thus he would not be convinced: At laſt *Samuel* was fain to fall upon him with down right blows, and thunder againſt him to ſtrike him down. *I tell you*, ſaith he *v.* 22,23. *here is rebellion againſt God, and rebellion is as the Sin of witchcraft, and ſtubborneſs is as iniquity and idolatry:* And at the laſt he was brought down, and fell under the Conviction, *v.* 24. *And Saul ſaid to Samuel, I have ſinned, and tranſgreſſed the Commandment of the Lord, and thy Words; becauſe I feared the people*: But you ſee what a deal of Do there was to bring *Saul* under the power of the Conviction; he ſtood upon his Juſtification. Juſt thus it is with a poor Sinner, as long as he can ſtand out againſt Conviction, he will put it off; as it is with a Malefactor at the Bar, as long as he can, he will not be convinced; he will plead, *Not guilty*; and juſtify himſelf, either by denying or mincing of it, or one thing or other, till the Evidence come clear againſt him; then his mouth is ſtopt; then he is convinced: Thus it is with a poor Sinner, the Lord brings his ſin before him, if he can he will deny it, and excuſe himſelf: But now when the Holy Ghoſt comes to convince of ſin, he ſtops the mouth, that he

he ſhall have nothing to plead to excuſe himſelf: As, I remember, 'tis the Apoſtles expreſſion, *Rom.* 3. 19. *That every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the World may become guilty before God*; ſo convinced, that the Sinner may have nothing to ſay, to juſtify him before God. This is another thing in Conviction; when Sin is not only ſet before the Soul, but ſo ſet home, that the Soul hath nothing to ſay to clear it ſelf.

3. *Thirdly*, There is a third Thing in a true Conviction of ſin; namely, When the Soul is really convinced by the Spirit of ſin, it hath not only ſin ſet before it, and ſo ſet before it, as the mouth is ſtopped, and ſilenced, that it cannot plead *Not guilty*: *But, where there is a true Conviction of Sin, the heart is affected with it, and afflicted for it.* And this is intimated by thoſe expreſſions you heard before, whereby the Holy Ghoſt doth ſet out Conviction of Sin, as it is ſet out by the ſhooting of an Arrow. Now, if an Arrow ſtick in the fleſh, it will put it to pain, it will make the fleſh ake; if there be a Prick at the heart, you will certainly be ſenſible of it, if a Bone be broken, there will be grief, and trouble, and affliction: Truly, thus it is in this work of Conviction of Sin, when the Spirit doth convince a Soul of Sin, it doth not only ſet ſin before him, and alſo ſet ſin ſo home, as the Soul cannot juſtify it ſelf, but now the Soul falls down under it, and is affected and afflicted with it; and therefore hence it is, that ſometimes when a Soul is convinced of Sin, it is affected with trembling and aſtoniſhment. He even trembles to think he ſhould be guilty of ſuch a ſin; as I remember, 'tis ſaid concerning the Jaylor, *Acts* 16.26. *He*

came in trembling before Paul and Silas; it is said, he sprang in, and came trembling; there was an Earth-quake, and that Earth-quake was an Heart-quake to him, it made his heart shake, and he saw himself in a damned condition, and now, saith he, *Sirs, What shall I do to be saved?* he came in trembling before *Paul* and *Silas*, saying, *What shall I do?* And sometimes 'tis expressed by shame and blushing; the Soul is even ashamed and confounded, when sin is set home, as you know it was the speech of *Ephraim*, *Jer.* 31. 18, 19. *He was ashamed and confounded for his rebellion, he was so like a Heifer, unaccustomed to the Yoke*: he could not bear the Lords Yoke, and when the Lord came to tame him, then he was ashamed, as *Ezra* said, *I am ashamed and blush before thee, Ezra*, 9.6. And sometimes with grief, and sorrow, and mourning; as when *Paul* had convinced the *Corinthians* of their sin in suffering the incestuous person amongst them, without bearing testimony against him, 2 *Cor.* 7.11. *What Carefulness*, saith he, *it wrought in you? What Sorrow? what godly Sorrow ye had amongst you?* Ay, they were convinced, and then they mourned and sorrowed. And so, sometimes the heart is as it were all a-mort, when the Soul is convinced of Sin, the heart is even dead, and knows not what to do: saith *Paul*, *When the Commandment came, Sin revived, and I died*, *Rom* 7. I saw my self a dead man, his heart was even dead. Well, thus you see what Conviction of Sin is, and wherein it lies, it consists in these three, or these three things do concur to a real Conviction of Sin, namely, A setting of sin before the Soul, and so setting it home that the Soul cannot deny it, but must

must fall down under it, and be affected and afflicted with it. Now, least any poor Soul may have a stumbling Block laid before it, let me only intimate this: That there are degrees of convincing of sin, all are not in a like measure convinced of Sin, some are convinced more, and others less; as now, some that have had civil Education, that have not lived in notorious and gross sins, and wickedness; their Convictions possibly may be more silent, and not make so great a noise as the Convictions of others do; as *Lydia*, she lived without breaking into notorious and gross wickednesses, and you see there was no great noise of her Conviction of Sin, though convinced of Sin she was; and there is a necessity of that, as you will hear by and by, now others that have lived in scandalous sins, notorious gross sins, in lewdness and wickedness, in opposing and persecuting the Saints, and the people of God, and the like, their Convictions ordinarily are more great, as in the case of *Paul*, *Paul* that was a Persecutor, his Convictions were such, that it made the Country to ring: it was heard off far and near; as *Paul* saith himself to King *Agrippa*, *These things were not done in a corner*: When God came to convert *Paul*, he first convinced him of his sin, *Saul*, *Saul*, *Why persecutest thou me*? saith he, *Who art thou Lord*? he answered, *I am Jesus*, *whom thou persecutest*; it was set home with power upon him.

Question.

But you will say, How shall a Soul know whether it have been sufficiently convinced of Sin, and

humbled for it as it ought to be? Because now here is the stumbling stone that some weak and tender hearts are ready to lay before their own faces; I have not been so convinced, and so humbled as others have been, and therefore I question whether I have been truly convinced or humbled for Sin or no, how shall I know whether I have been truly convinced of sin?

Answer.

The Truth is, *It is not possible to determine a particular degree of convincing of* Sin *for every particular person*, and therefore I shall give you this as a Rule to know when your convincing of Sin is sufficient; namely, *then convincing of sin is sufficient when as a Soul is so convinced of sin, as that now it is wholly taken off from all hopes of being saved by any thing in its self, and it is made now to look towards Christ, and the Righteousness of Christ*; though possibly in a weak manner, yet notwithstanding, it is taken off from looking to any thing in it self, or hoping in any thing it self, to help forward its own salvation: it is cut off from that by being convinced of Sin; now I cannot help my self, I cannot save my self, by all that ever I can do, *What shall I do?* as they in the *Acts, Chap.* 2. *Sirs, What shall we do to be saved?* They were at their wits end, they saw nothing that they could do, could save their Souls. And so the Jaylor, *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* This now is the first thing, you see what we are to understand by this Conviction of sin. *When he is come he shall convince the World of sin.*

2. But

2. But to come to the second thing, namely, to shew you, *That convincing of Sin, is a thing that is necessary in order to Conversion and Salvation.* That it is necessary, doth plainly appear thus, namely, Why else is it made to be the work of the Spirit, if convincing of sin be not necessary, would the Spirit convince of sin? Can we think, or say, that the Spirit would work or do any thing that is not necessary.

Again, If so be that generally all that are converted and saved, have found a work of conviction upon their hearts, then certainly it is necessary in order to conversion and Salvation.

And again, (not to multiply things of this nature) If this work of convincing of sin be not necessary, To what end else serves the Law? Saith the Apostle, *Rom. 7. 7. What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? God forbid: Nay, I had not known sin, but by the Law; I had not known Lust, except the Law had said, Thou shalt not covet.* And at the 9th *Verse, I was alive without the Law once, but when the Commandment came, sin revived, and I died: Wherefore the Law is holy, and the Commandment holy, just and good.* The Law (saith he) is good, the Law is just and holy, it is not in vain; But, Wherefore serves the Law? It is to convince of sin: Then conviction of sin is necessary: and so the Apostle to the *Galatians*, Gal. 3. 19. *Wherefore then serves the Law?* There's the Question; *It was added because of Transgressions, till the Seed should come.* And then at the 24th *Verse, Wherefore the Law was a School-master to bring us to Christ*; to prepare us as it were to come to Christ. Now therefore, if the Law be necessary to discover sin,

then the discovery and convincing of sin is necessary. But not to stand upon this.

Question.

The great *Question* is, *Upon what account, or in what regard is Convincing of sin necessary in order to Salvation?* This is a great *Question*, *Upon what account is the conviction of sin necessary, in order to the conversion and salvation of a sinner?*

Answer.

I Answer briefly, *Upon manifold accounts and regards.* I shall name some,

1. Convincing of sin is necessary in order to salvation, *Because except a soul be convinced of sin, it will hardly ever come to Christ.* And, that is necessary, for a Soul to come to Christ, that is necessary for salvation. Now a Soul that is not convinced of sin, will hardly ever come to Christ, he will make any shift in the world before he will come to Christ, *Luke* 8. 43. 44. It is said of the Woman that had the *Issue of Blood, At last she came to Christ*; but mark, she made all the shift she could, before she would come; she had it twelve years, and she spent every penny she had, she spent all her Living on Physitians, to cure her distemper, and when all was gone, and there was no other way to help her, then she came to Christ: So, till a Soul be convinced of sin, it will never come to Christ; this is the course of sinners, until they be convinced of the necessity they will not come, *John* 5. 40. Saith Christ, *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have Life.* No, the soul will look to find

find the Life in its own hands, by its own works and endeavours, by its Prayers and Duties —: He will not come to Christ that he might have Life; And therefore when Christ doth tender grace and mercy to sinners, Alas! they slight it and despise it, because they have not been convinced. You shall see there, *John* 8. 32, and so on, Christ is directing of the *Jews* how they might be freed from sin, how they might have their freedom, Saith Christ, *If the Son therefore make you free, you shall be free indeed.* Now mark, What do they account of Christ's freedom, or directions to come to him, to be made free? *Verse* 33. Say they, *We are Abrahams Seed, and were never in Bondage* to any man, we are free enough; they were never convinced of the bondage of sin, therefore now the offer of Christ to free them, is of no account with them. The soul that is not convinced of sin, cares not for Christs tenders and offers of Grace, *John* 9. 39, 40. Christ is there directing the Jews to come to him to have their blind eyes opened, they were spiritually blind, and saith Christ, *For Judgment am I come into the World, that they which see not might see, and they which see might be made blind.* Well, those *Jews* they were not convinced of their spiritual blindness, and therefore they make a tush at it, What? Dost thou come to cure our blindness? to make us see? *Are we blind also* (say they), they scorned his words; because they were not convinced of sin, they cared not for coming to Christ for any grace or any mercy, and therefore when Christ would have a Soul to come to him for any grace or mercy, he takes this course with them, namely, first to convince them of their

sinful estate, *Rev.* 3. 17, 18, 19, 20. Christ doth counsel them there to come to him for Eye-salve, that they might See, and for Gold, that they might be rich, and for white Raiment, that they might be clothed; but now before Christ doth make this tender to them, he doth first take a course to convince them of their sin; *Thou saist*, (saith he to the Church of *Laodicea*) *that thou art rich, and wanteſt nothing; but I tell thee*, saith Christ, *that thou art poor, and miſerable, and wretched, and blind, and naked; and therefore now I counſel thee, to come and buy Eye-ſalve of me, and Gold, and white Rayment.* So that this is the way that Christ takes when he would have a soul to come to him, he convinces him first of sin. Therefore this is one ground or respect why conviction of sin is so neceſſary in order to salvation, becauſe else a Soul will never be willing to come to Christ.

2. Becauſe, *Unleſs a Soul be convinced of sin, Christ is not willing to come to that Soul, to ſave that Soul.* I say, Christ is not willing to save a soul that is not convinced of Sin, and therefore saith Christ (mark I pray) *The Whole need not the Phyſitian, but thoſe that are ſick.* Mat. 9. 12. *I came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance:* Christ came not to call them that are no sinners to repentance, And who are theſe? Are not all sinners? Is not every one a sinner? There is not a Juſt man upon the Earth, that liveth and sinneth not; But who are theſe that are Righteous here? *I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners.* Who are Sinners? By sinners here, he meanes thoſe that are convinced of their sinful eſtate; and thoſe Righteous, that are not convinced; they look upon them-

themſelves as Righteous, though they are as ſinful as any others; yet notwithſtanding they not being convinced, they look upon themſelves as juſt and righteous; Now, ſaith Chriſt, *I come not to call the Righteous, but I come to call Sinners to repentance*: *Sinners*, thoſe that are convinced of ſin, that are ſinners indeed, and know themſelves to be ſinners; I come to call them to repentance, to life and ſalvation; and mark, ſaith Chriſt again, *Luke* 19. 10. *I am come to ſeek and to ſave that which is loſt*; I am come to them that are loſt, I come not to ſeek and to ſave them that are not loſt; loſt, you will ſay, Is not every ſinner loſt? ſaith the Apoſtle, *If our Goſpel be hid, 'tis hid to them that are loſt*. Is not every ſinner a loſt Creature? a dead Creature? What, doth Chriſt come to ſeek and to ſave every ſinner in the World? No, ſaith he, *I am come to ſeek and to ſave them that are loſt*, who are they that are loſt? 'tis true, all ſinners are loſt in reſpect of their ſtate and Condition, but every Sinner is not loſt in reſpect of their ſenſe of their loſt condition. I pray when do you look upon a Man or Woman to be loſt? When may one be ſaid to be loſt? I pray, mark, you may obſerve theſe three things in it.

1. When he is gone out of his way, when he hath miſſed his way whither he intends to go, then he is loſt, but not only ſo, But

2. When he hath not only miſſed his way, and he is out of his way, but alſo when he doth not know the way, how to return into the right way, he doth not know the way back again; you will ſay, now the man is loſt. But

3. Further, when a man comes to be ſenſible

of

of this, that he is gone out of his way, and he doth not know which way to return home again, and he is ready to ſit down becauſe he doth not know which way to take, only ſaith he, if I go this way or that way, I may go further out of my way, therefore he is fain to ſit down, and knows not what to do, nor which way to take, ſuch a man is loſt; but if a man be out of the way, and know the way back again, he is not loſt; he may find the way, or if ſo be he be not ſenſible he is out of his way, he is not loſt; but when theſe things concur together, then he is loſt. Thus it is with a ſinner, when he comes to be convinced that he is out of the way of Salvation, and he knows not how to come into the way, and he knows he is like to periſh in this ſtate he is now in, now the ſinner is loſt; Now ſaith Chriſt, This is the poor Creature that I am come to ſeek and to ſave; when a poor ſinner is convinced of his ſinful Eſtate and is ſo loſt, now Chriſt comes to ſeek and to ſave him. Now if a man or woman be not loſt, Chriſt will not come to ſeek & to ſave them *That are loſt*, that is, thoſe that are convinced of their being in a loſt Eſtate. And that is the ſecond Reaſon or Ground why convincing of ſin is neceſſary in order to Salvation, Chriſt elſe will hardly come to ſeek and to ſave ſuch.

3. Convincing of Sin is neceſſary in order to Salvation, *Becauſe unleſs a Soul be convinced of ſin, if Chriſt ſhould come to ſave it, it will not be willing to accept of Chriſt*, and receive Chriſt and Salvation by Chriſt, he will not be willing withall; no, *Chriſt came to his own, and his own received him not*; He came to the *Jews* that were (as it were) his own

own Country Men, but they would not receive him: Why? they were not convinced; One that is not sick, will not care for receiving the Physician, or for having the Physician to come at him, he hath no need of him: *The Whole need not the Physician* (saith Christ) *but they that are sick.* Truly, untill a Soul be convinced of Sin, it is whole and sound in its own Apprehension, and that Soul doth not need the Physician: Let Christ come and offer himself, and tender Life and Salvation, he doth not accept of it, he hath no need of it; and hence it is that Christ tenders and offers himself in the Gospel, and offers Salvation therein to poor sinners; and People, because they are not convinced of their need of Christ, receive him not: Christ comes near to them, and offers himself, and Life, and Salvation to them, through himself, and by believing on himself; Ay, but they will not accept him, nor receive him, they will not close with him; they will not own him though Christ come so near to them: 'Tis true, Christ doth not come so immediately to save those that are not convinced, but he will first convince them, and then save them. That is the third Argument upon which account Conviction of Sin is necessary in order to Conversion and Salvation.

4. *If a Soul be not convinced of sin, that Soul will be hardly taken off from its sins*; it will not part with its sins, and if it do not part with sin, it cannot be saved; no man can be saved with his sins. I say, a Soul that is not convinced of sin, will not really part with his sins; 'tis true, a Soul may possibly be restrained sometimes, that it dares not venture upon those sins that it did before. as

possibly

possibly through some dread, or terror, anguish, or fear: possibly the Soul hath been amazed, through some eminent danger which he hath been in; possibly he hath been sick to death, nigh to the grave, and hath seen the door of Eternity to stand open to receive him, he hath been amazed, and now, if the Lord please he may have his life, he will turn a new man, and forsake those evil ways and courses he formerly lived in; or if he be in some sudden danger, or accident, that he is amazed and affrighted: O now, he will never do as he hath done, but now, when the danger is over, and the fear is vanished, he is the same man he was before. I could give you a sad story of this, but that I would not take up time that way now, you know how it was with *Balaam*, when *Balak* sent to him to curse *Israel*; *Balaam* met with a message from God to the contrary, *Do not go with him*, saith he, *for it will cost you your life*, when the Messenger came; saith *Balaam*, *If Balak would give me his house full of gold and silver, I cannot go beyond the Commandment of my God*; yet *Balaam* had an eye to the wages of unrighteousness, and he would try to go, and at last ventures to go, he might be restrained a while, but he was not really convinced of Sin, and on he would go, he would venture at last. Just as it is with two Lovers, two young people fall in love, and their Parents are against their proceedings, and their Parents threaten them, and charge them to come no more at one another; but so long as their affections hold, they will find some way or other to come together, and though they may for a time be restrained, yet they will take some occasion or other to come together again,

again. Thus it is with a sinner, so long as his affections are not taken off from sin, and till a Soul be convinced of sin, his affections remain to it, and though it may be affrighted, and restrained for a time, yet it will return again: Just as it is with a Bowl, it will run on so long as the force of the hand remains, but it will return again to its natural Bias; so it is with a sinner, possibly he may be under some restraint through some fright and amazement, by some eminent danger it is in: but when that fear or fright is over, as long as the affections hold, and were never disingaged and broken off from sin, the sinner will return and be as eager and as violent upon his sins as before; but when a Soul comes to be really convinced of his sin, and hath it set home upon him, as suppose it be the prophanation of the Sabbath, or suppose it be disobedience to Parents, or suppose this or that sin, if a Soul come to be really convinced of it, its affections towards it are broken off, and then it will be ready to say with *Ephraim*, Hos. 4. ult. *What have I to do any more with Idols*, he had been convinced of it, and now, *What have I to do any more with Idols*? This is the fourth Argument, whereby it doth appear, that this work of Convincing of sin is necessary in order to Conversion, and Salvation.

5. Convincing of Sin is necessary in order to Salvation, *Because unless a Soul be really convinced of sin that Soul can never love Jesus Christ*, never prize Jesus Christ: *Unto them that believe*, saith the Apostle, *he is precious*, 1 Pet. 2.7. That is to you who have been convinced of Sin, and brought off from Sin by the power of the Spirit, convinced of Sin,

Sin, and drawn to Christ, by faith and believing through the Spirit; now to you Jesus Christ is precious. O, when a Soul comes to be sensible what a lost creature it is, how undone it is in it self, it will think how much it is engaged, and beholden to Christ! O, this is he that I am bound to love for ever; this is he that hath done so much for me; if it had not been for Christ, I had perished for ever! The Soul when it hath been convinced of Sin, and brought off from the love of Sin, and brought to lean upon Christ by Faith, now Jesus Christ is lovely and precious to him; and hence you may see, what is the reason that many Professors that have made a great shew in the world, and a great noise in the Churches, and yet they have little love to Christ, and Jesus Christ is not very precious to them. And possibly many complain of it, O that I could love Jesus Christ more (and it is a good complaint I confess)! O that he were more precious to me! and what is the reason that Jesus Christ is more precious to our Souls? and that the Soul can love the Lord Jesus Christ no more? O! here is one great reason, possibly the Soul was never really and truly convinced of Sin, the more really the Soul hath been convinced of Sin, the more dear and precious will Jesus Christ be to that Soul.

6. And lastly. The last Ground and Respect, for which it is so necessary, that a Soul should be convinced of sin in order to Salvation; *Because, else if a Soul be not really convinced of sin, that Soul notwithstanding all his Profession, will be very unstable in its Faith and Comforts*: It will be tottering and wavering, that Soul will never be rooted and grounded

grounded, but its Comforts will be up and down: it will be like a houſe that is built upon a ſandy foundation, a light foundation, that hath no depth, and you ſee the danger of that houſe that is built upon the Sands, that hath a ſhallow ſlight foundation, it is in danger to tumble, eſpecially when ſtorms come, and great Winds blow, as Chriſt ſpeaks, *Mat.* 7. to our preſent purpoſe, ſaith he, *He that heareth my words and doth them not, I will liken him to a Builder that built his houſe upon the Sands*: And, ſaith he, *When the Wind blew, and the Rain beat upon the houſe, it fell, becauſe it wanted a good Foundation.* Truly, ſo a Soul that hath no ſure Foundation, that is, that was never really convinced of ſin, of his need of Chriſt, that Soul will be like a houſe without a Foundation, it will meet with temptations, ſtorms and tempeſts to try what ground it ſtands on; and hence it is, that it comes to be ſo often tottering and ſhaking. I remember a ſpeech of a holy eminent Servant of Chriſt, to ſet out the neceſſity of Conviction of ſin, ſaith he, *The leſs Fine a man pays for his houſe, when he enters, the more Rent he muſt pay afterward.* He meant thus, the leſs Conviction a man hath of ſin at firſt, that is the Fine, the leſs his Fine is, the more Rent he muſt pay afterward, his meaning was this; the more he will be ſubject to Troubles, and Doubts, and Scruples afterwards. A Soul that hath not a real conviction of ſin upon him, that Soul will be unſtable, its Comforts will be unſtable, and though he may hold up his head, ſo long as all is calm, and clear above him, but when the aſſaults of the Devil come, and the powers of Hell are let looſe upon it, to try its Foundation; if

if the foundation be not deep rooted, all the building will come to nothing; it is like a Plant or Tree that is planted but ſhallow in the Ground, and will be apt to wither, ſo Chriſt compares it, *Mat.* 13.21. *The Seed that fell upon the ſtony ground, ſprang up for a while, but when the Sun did riſe,* when temptations came, ſcorching temptations, and tribulations, and tryals came, *they withered away, becauſe they wanted depth of earth for the root*; they had no rooting, they were not humbled and convinced of ſin, they took up a Profeſſion, and confeſſed Chriſt, and profeſſed Chriſt, but never were truly convinced of ſin; and this is the great reaſon why Profeſſors are ſubject to ſo many doubts and ſcruples about their condition, when they come into ſickneſs and dangers, then they are ready to queſtion their condition; What is the reaſon? why poſſibly this may be one, Becauſe they were never convinced truly of ſin by the Spirit of God. And therefore you ſee now, upon all theſe accounts, That Conviction of ſin is very neceſſary for ſinners, in order to their Converſion and Salvation.

So now, I have finiſhed the ſecond Thing propounded, I ſhould now have come to the third Thing, to ſhew you, That convincing of ſin, is the Work of the Spirit of God. But that and ſome other things, I muſt leave till another opportunity.

The

The Holy Ghoſt convinceth of Sin.

SERMON V.

JOHN 16. 9.

Of Sin, becauſe they believe not on me.

YOU have heard the coherence of theſe words before, and therefore I ſhall not trouble you with that; and the Point you may remember what it was, that was laſt propounded from theſe words, Namely,

That it is the very firſt work of the Spirit of God, in order to Salvation, to convince the Soul of Sin.

For ſo Chriſt here is comforting of his Diſciples againſt their ſorrow upon his departure from them; and he tels them, That he would ſend the Comforter to them, and he tells them what the Comforter ſhould do, he ſhould aſſiſt them in their Miniſtry, towards the converſion and ſalvation of Souls; and the firſt thing he ſhall do, he ſhall convince the World of *Sin*, and then of *Righteouſneſs*, and then of *Judgement*; but this is his firſt work, to convince the world of *Sin*.

There were four things propounded to be spoken to for the clearing of this Point.

1. To shew you what we are to understand by this Conviction of *Sin*, which is the first work of the Spirit, and wherein it lay, and that you heard in three things.

2. You heard the necessity of it; why this work of convincing of *Sin* is so necessary in order to conversion and Salvation. You heard the necessity of it in five or six things, upon which account it was necessary in order to salvation, to be convinced of *Sin*. Well, there are two things yet remain to be spoken to for the opening of this Point.

3. The third thing is to shew, that this work of convincing of *Sin*, is the proper work of the Spirit. Nothing short of the Spirit of God, can really and truly convince the soul of *Sin*, in order to salvation. And then,

4. That it is not only the work of the Spirit, but the first work of the Spirit, in order to Salvation.

These two things, I shall now proceed to, through the Lords assistance.

3. Well then, we are to fall upon the third to make it evident to you, that the work of convincing of *Sin*, is the proper work of the Spirit of God. And how doth that appear? Briefly I shall give you two or three Demonstrations of it.

1. It appears *from the opposition that is in every carnal heart to be convinced of Sin.* There is a desperate opposition in our hearts naturally, we are utterly averse and unwilling to be convinced of *Sin*: We are loth to come to the Light as Christ tells

tells us, *John* 3. 20. *Every one that doth evil hateth the Light, neither cometh to the Light leaſt his deeds ſhould be reproved*, leſt he ſhould be convinced; It is the ſame word with this in the Text: He is loath to be convinced of ſin, it is the natural frame of our hearts to be averſe and oppoſite to conviction of ſin; therefore there muſt come a ſtronger power, the power of the Spirit, to this work of convincing of ſin, elſe we ſhall never be convinced; for, I pray mark, what this convincing of ſin is; For a ſoul to yield to the convictions of ſin, is to yield to its own ſentence of condemnation; and do you think that any one is ready to yield to the ſentence of its own condemnation? Now if a ſoul yield to the conviction of ſin, he yields to the ſentence of condemnation, *For the ſoul that ſinneth, ſhall dye*: And if a ſoul yield that he is guilty of this or that ſin, now he yields to the ſentence of Death and Damnation; And do you think the ſoul will yield to the ſentence of Condemnation paſſed againſt it ſelf? You ſee ſometimes a Malefactor at the Bar, Is he willing, think you, to be convinced of his crime which he is accuſed of? No, he will ſtand out againſt it and deny it as long as he can, and if he cannot deny it, he will mince it, and will not yield to the conviction ſo long as he can poſſibly hold out againſt it, and this is the guiſe of our hearts naturally, not to yield to conviction, but we will hold out againſt it as long as ever we can, let any man come to us to convince us, and reprove us, we will hold againſt it, and ſhift it off, and mince it, and avoid it all that ever we can; this is natural to us, as it was with our firſt Parents, when God called them to

an account for their firſt ſin, they ſhifted it off; *Adam* to his Wife, his Wife to the Serpent, and would not willingly be convinced; Juſt, as (I told you, before) it was with *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 15. When *Saul* had diſobeyed the Commandment of the Lord in going againſt *Amalek*, God gave him a ſevere charge to cut off all, Men, Women, Children and Cattel; Well, he cuts off the generality of the People, but he ſpared *Agag*, and he ſpared the beſt of the Cattel; Well, *Samuel* comes to him afterward, and *Saul* he comes boaſting, ſaith he, *Come thou bleſſed of the Lord, I have fulfilled the Commandment of the Lord:* haſt thou fulfilled the Commandment of the Lord, ſaith *Samuel*? *What meaneth then the bleating of the Sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the Oxen*? well, he would not be convinced, ſaith he, 'Tis true, ſome of them are ſaved alive for ſacrifice for the Lord; he would not yield to the Conviction, until ſuch time as *Samuel* was fain to fall downright upon him, and then he fell down under the Conviction, and confeſſed and acknowledged his Sin; Thus it is, we are naturally averſe to yield to the convictions of Sin. I pray, mind what I ſay, take a notorious Sinner, one that is commonly known to be guilty of groſs ſins, ſuppoſe drunkenneſs, or uncleanneſs. Come to this man and tell him, The Word of the Lord ſaith expreſly, *That no unrighteous perſon, that no unclean perſon, no drunkard ſhall enter into the Kingdom of God.* Can he deny the Scripture? No, he cannot deny it; well, but then come and tell him, you are guilty of drunkenneſs, you are guilty of uncleanneſs; and therefore the concluſion is this, it will naturally follow from theſe two premiſes,

premiſes, *That you ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* Will he yield to the Conviction? No, unleſs the Spirit of God come and make him yield to it, he will never yield. Therefore I ſay, from that natural oppoſition that is in all our hearts againſt this work of Conviction, it is therefore required that the power of the Spirit be put forth upon the Soul, ſo Chriſt promiſeth here; *I will ſend the Comforter, and he ſhall convince the World of Sin.*

2. There is not only a natural averſeneſs and oppoſition againſt it, in our carnal hearts, but *Satan alſo, the Devil, he will help the Soul to hold out againſt the Conviction of ſin as long as he can,* he will keep the Soul from yielding to it, for the Devil knows this, that when once a Soul is convinced of ſin by the Spirit of God, he is in danger to loſe that Soul, he is in danger that that Soul will make an eſcape; therefore he lays about him, and doth all that ever he can, to keep the Soul from yielding to be convinced of ſin; juſt like a Jaylor, if he hath a priſoner, whom he perceives hath a mind to make an eſcape, he will lay the more Irons upon him, and have the greater watch and guard about him; ſo in this caſe, if the Devil ſee a Soul in danger to make an eſcape he will clap on all the power he can, to keep the Soul from being convinced of Sin; or like a Governor of a Town, if the Town be beſieged, and he perceive where the Enemy is like to make an Inroad, a Breach, to be ſure he will fortify that place; thus the Devil doth when he diſcerns a Soul is in danger to make an eſcape, to be delivered from his power, then his deſign is to fortify and ſtrengthen

all that ever he can the Soul, againſt yielding to any work of Conviction, and therefore we read, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5. of ſtrong holds, fortifications, ſtrong reaſonings; ſaith the Apoſtle, *The Weapons of our Warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of ſtrong holds.* There are ſtrong holds, and fortifications, that the Devil doth make round about the Soul, that the Soul ſhould not be able to make an eſcape, except there come a ſtronger than he; for the Devil is compared to *a ſtrong man armed*, and except a ſtronger than he come, he will keep poſſeſſion; Now then there muſt come a ſtronger than the Devil, and this is nothing leſs than the Spirit of God. The power of the Spirit comes, and makes conviction to take place on the heart, for the Devil will fortify and ſtrengthen all that ever he can, with reaſons; as for your ſins, when the Soul comes to be troubled at ſin, Why? you are none of the greateſt ſinners, there are hundreds, and thouſands, greater ſinners than you are, and God is merciful, and gracious to ſinners, and God will pardon ſinners that do repent, and, *at what time ſoever a ſinner doth repent* — And ſuch kind of things as theſe are, whereby he ſtrengthens the Soul againſt yielding to Convictions of ſin; and now the power and policy of the Devil is beyond any ordinary created power, therefore there muſt be a ſtronger power than is in the World that muſt be able really and truly to convince the Soul, of Sin, and that can be no leſs than the power of the Spirit of God, and this is the ſecond Demonſtration of it, why it muſt be the Work of the Spirit to convince the Soul of ſin.

Objection.

Objection.

But you will ſay to me, But cannot the evil Spirit? may not the Devil ſometimes trouble a Soul about Sin, and ſet ſin home upon the Conſcience? and if ſo, then it is not in the power of the holy Spirit only, but the evil Spirit alſo may convince the Soul of Sin.

Anſwer.

Truly Brethren, that the evil Spirit, that the Devil may trouble a Soul about Sin, and for Sin, I think it is out of queſtion, by the example of *Judas*, that had his Sin ſo ſet home upon him, that he could not live under it; nay, Brethren, the evil Spirit may ſet home ſin upon the hearts of Gods people, and endeavour to overwhelm them: I remember what *Job* ſpeaks, *Cap.* 6. 4. *The Arrows of the Almighty are within me, and the poyſon thereof drinketh up my Spirit, the Terrors of God ſet themſelves in array againſt me.*— So *Job* 13. 26. *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me, the terrors of the Almighty are upon me.* Brethren, Do you think now, that this was from the Spirit of God? the Spirit of God, when once it comes to be a Spirit of Adoption, it never comes to be the Spirit of Bondage again. So the Apoſtle ſaith expreſly, *Rom.* 8. 15. *You have not received the Spirit of Bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of Adoption.*— Now 'tis true, *Job* doth aſcribe it to God, yet it may be from Satan, becauſe *Job* did aſcribe all that ever he met withall, to God. Satan was an Inſtrument to raiſe a ſtorm, to blow down the

houſe where his Children were, yet ſaith *Job*: *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away*; he takes notice of the hand of God in it, ſo in this caſe; *The Terrors of the Almighty ſet themſelves in Array againſt me*: This may be from the evil Spirit which did become a Spirit of Bondage to him.

Queſtion.

But you will ſay then, *How ſhall we know when Sin is ſet home upon the Soul; whether it be from the evil Spirit, or from the holy Spirit of God*? This is a Queſtion of very great concernment, I ſhall therefore deſire (through the Lords aſſiſtance) to ſpeak ſomething that way, and to offer ſome things to your conſideration about it, *How you ſhall know when Sin is ſet home upon the heart, Whether it be from the evil Spirit, or from the holy Spirit of God*; for indeed if it be from the Spirit of God, it is in order to Converſion and Salvation, but if by the evil Spirit, it is in order to damnation.

Anſwer.

There are ſeveral things that I ſhall offer to your conſideration about this.

1. *The evil Spirit*, when he comes and brings ſin, and ſets it before the ſoul, commonly, he doth it in a tumultuous way, he doth it in a confuſed manner, to put the ſoul into a hurry, that poſſibly the ſoul ſhall be mightily troubled about ſin, and cry out, O, I am a damned Creature, and I ſhall be damned in Hell for my ſins, and the wrath of God will abide upon me for ever for my ſins, and yet poſſibly, the ſoul doth not know what particular ſin it is; if you come to particulars, and ask how you are guilty of this or that particular

ſin?

ſin? O yes, they are ſinners, and they are guilty before God, but come to any particular ſin the ſoul will not fix there, but go from one to another, and ſtill the Devil keeps the Soul in a hurry and confuſion, that one that hears him ſpeak ſometimes, cannot tell what to make of his condition. O I ſhall be damned for ever for my ſins, and the wrath of God will abide upon me for ever, and yet not convinced by the Spirit of God. The Devil doth what he can to overwhelm the Soul, as it was the caſe of Saul, 1 *Sam.* 28. 5. *Sauls heart did tremble*, he was put into an amazing frame, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled, and afterward, at the 15*th Verſe*, ſaith he, *I am ſorely diſtreſſed, the Philiſtims make war againſt me, and God is departed from me. I am ſorely diſtreſſed.* Why? what was the matter? he could not tell very well what the matter was, but the Devil had troubled his ſpirit, had afflicted him, he was put into a ſore affright, an amaze, and trembling, and he knew not what the matter was, but God had caſt him off, and forſaken him, and now he muſt lie under the wrath of God for ever. Now the Devil to help him forward in his deſpair, at the 18*th* and 19*th Verſes*, he claps one ſin upon him, *Becauſe thou obeyedſt not the voice of the Lord, nor executedſt his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee.* And ſaith the Devil to him, *The Lord ſhall deliver you into the hands of the Philiſtims, and to morrow ſhall thou and thy Sons be with me.* And thus the Devil claps upon him to confound him, and 'tis ſaid *Verſe* 2. *Then Saul fell ſtraightway all along upon the earth and was ſore afraid*; his heart died in him like a

ſtone,

ſtone, thus the trouble upon his Spirit, being from *Satan*, it was in a kind of hurry and Confuſion, that one could not tell what to make of his condition, but now on the other ſide, when the Spirit of God comes to convince a Soul of ſin, it ſets ſin in order before the Soul, firſt one thing and then another, *Pſal.* 50.11. *I will reprove thee and ſet thy ſins in order before thy face*; in an orderly way, not in a hurry to confound and diſtract a ſoul, but I will ſet them in order before thee, and ſo you may obſerve thoſe that have been convinced of their ſins, their ſins have been ſet in an orderly way before them, in the 2 *Sam.* 12.9,10. When *Nathan* came to convince *David* of his ſins, he ſet his ſins in order before him, firſt one ſin, and then another ſin, and ſo you may obſerve in the Goſpel that thoſe that have been convinced of ſin, the Spirit hath been an orderly Spirit, and hath ſet ſin in order before them. So that, that is one thing, whereby you may know the difference between the trouble for ſin that comes from the evil ſpirit, and the convincing of ſin that comes from the holy Spirit of God.

2. Take another thing whereby you may ſee the difference, and that is in the End or Deſign that Satan aims at in his troubling a Soul about Sin; What is the Deſign? *The great deſign of the Devil is to bring the Soul into deſpair*, into a deſperate caſe, and ſo at laſt to make away it ſelf, to diſpatch it ſelf, that is the great end that Satan drives at in his troubling a ſoul about ſin, and with ſin, to drive the ſoul into deſpair, to overwhelm the Soul, and cauſe the Soul, if it be poſſible, to make an end of it ſelf; that is the deſign of Satan,

he

he will ſo ſet Sin before the Soul, that it is ſo great that there is no hope it ſhould be pardoned; when he tempts a Soul to ſin, he makes but a litte matter of it, it is but a ſmall matter, and it is but once, but when the ſoul hath once committed it, then his great deſign is to overwhelm the Soul, and to ſet the ſin before the ſoul, in ſuch a manner, that it looks like the unpardonable Sin. Well, Your ſin is now unpardonable, and there is no hope for you; and many times he makes ſouls believe that they have ſinned againſt the Holy Ghoſt, and now there is no hope for them: Juſt as it was with *Cain. Gen.* 4. 11. Oh, ſaith he, *My ſin is greater than can be forgiven.* This now is the deſign of Satan, to cauſe a Soul, if poſſible, to make away it ſelf; you ſee how the Devil carried it towards *Judas*: *Judas* had committed a very great ſin in betraying the Son of God; Well, when he had ſinned, the Devils deſign was now ſo to ſet home his ſin upon him that he could find no reſt day nor night, till ſuch time as he had gone and hanged himſelf. It is the great end that Satan aims at in his troubling a Soul about ſin; his great deſign is to bring the ſoul into deſpair, and ſo to make away it ſelf.

Whereas now on the other hand, the great end of the Spirit of God is to make a ſoul ſenſible of ſin, ſo as to be humbled for it, ſo as to repent of it; 'Tis true indeed, ſometimes when ſin is ſet home by the Spirit of God upon a Soul, the Soul may be brought very low, may be much overwhelmed, and may poſſibly be brought into a deſpairing, deſponding condition, and may be ready ſometimes to make away it ſelf, to deſtroy it ſelf, by the Devils ſetting in with it; yet ordinarily the

the Spirit of God comes and prevents such things, where the conviction begins from the Spirit, the holy Spirit doth prevent such things, the Soul is made to look up to God, as *Jonah* did, *Chap.* 2. 4. *I said, I was cast out of thy sight, the Lord hath rejected me: Yet,* saith he, *will I look towards thy holy Temple.* The Spirit of God had convinced him of his sin, and though he did seem to be cast out of God's sight out of his favour, and was thrown into the belly of the Whale, yet the Spirit of the Lord would not suffer him to be despondent and give over all as desperate; *Yet will I look towards thy Holy Temple.* That is the second thing whereby we may discern the difference.

3. *When the evil Spirit doth set home a sin upon the Soul, it is to drive the Soul further from God.* When the Holy Ghost comes to convince a Soul of sin, it is to draw the Soul nearer to God. You may observe it, that when ever the Devil doth set home a sin upon the Soul, it is to drive the Soul further off from God. Take an Instance or two; as in the Example of our first Parents, *Gen.* 3. The Devil had been busie with our first Parents, to bring them into sin, to make them eat of the forbidden fruit; Well, when they had committed the sin, though before he had told them it was for their profit and advantage, *Their Eyes should be opened, and they should be as gods,*— Yet when once they had committed the sin, he sets it so home upon them, that they fled from the presence of God, *and hid themselves*; they durst not appear before God, they went and hid themselves amongst the Trees of the Garden, that God was fain to call after them. And so you shall find in the example of

Cain,

Cain, *Gen.* 4. *Cain*, when he had committed the ſin of murder, and had killed his brother *Abel*, *Verſe* 16. it is ſaid there, *That Cain went out from the preſence of the Lord*; he departed from God, then he went away from God; But how could that be? Is not God preſent every where? how could *Cain* go out from the preſence of the Lord? Why, he did not go from the eſſential preſence of God, but from the preſence of God, that is, from the ſpiritual preſence of God in his Ordinances, he did not now draw near to God in his worſhip, but he went away from God, from the Church, from the Ordinances, from the Means of Communion with God, for the Ordinances of God: the Church of God, was in the houſe of his Father *Adam*, and ſo they worſhipped God in that family, but he went out from the preſence of the Lord when he had committed that ſin; this is the deſign of Satan, when he can overwhelm the ſoul with ſin, his great end is, as to bring it to deſpair, ſo alſo to drive it further from the preſence of God. But now you may obſerve, when the Spirit of God doth convince a ſoul of ſin, the Conviction doth cauſe a ſoul to draw near to God in holy duties, in holy Ordinances, and to draw near to God for mercy and grace through Chriſt: ſo ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 7. 6, 7 He was under a great trouble in his Conſcience and Mind about ſin, and he falls a pleading with God; *Will the Lord caſt off for ever*, ſaith he, *Will he be gracious no more?* and thus he falls on arguing and pleading, *I will remember*, ſaith he, *the years of the right hand of the Moſt High*, and ſo *Pſal.* 88. there you have a ſad *Pſalm*, A ſoul that was mightily

oppreſſed

oppressed under the burthen of sin, and there he pleads *Verse* 10. saith he, *Lord, what good will my Life do thee, if thou shouldst cut off my days? shall the dead praise thee?* And so he goes on, pleading and arguing strongly with God; and so in the example of *Jona, Chap.* 2. 4,7. *I said I was cast out of thy Sight, yet will I look towards thy holy Temple. When my soul fainted within me, I remembred the the Lord, and my prayer came in unto thee towards thy holy Temple.* He was so far from running away from God, when his sin was set home upon him, that now he draws near to God, and humbled himself, and sought the Lord, *And my prayer came in unto thee into thy holy Temple.* That is a third difference between the trouble that arises for sin from the evil Spirit, and the trouble that arises in a soul, that is convinced by the Spirit of God.

4. Commonly, *When Sin is set home by the evil Spirit,* and a Soul comes to be troubled for sin by the means of the Devil, *commonly you will find that that Soul will be ready to rise up against the very Instruments that are the means of his conviction*: The Soul will rise up with indignation, against the very Instruments that are the means to convince it of sin: I might give you many Instances for this, *Acts* 5. 33. at the 30*th verse*, *Peter* is endeavouring to convince the *Jews* of their sin in murdering of Christ, *The God of our Fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, and hanged on a Tree*; and mark, *verse* 33. What was the event of it? How did this work upon their hearts? Their hearts did rise up with indignation against *Peter*, and the rest of the Disciples, that went about to convince

convince them of their ſin. *When they heard that they were cut to the heart, and took counſel to ſlay them.* They could not bear it, if it had been from the Spirit of God they could not have took it ſo. *They were cut to the heart, and took counſel to ſlay them.* So *Acts* 7. 51,52,54. It is ſaid there, When *Stephen* went about to convince the *Jews* of that horrible ſin of ſlaying the Prophets; *Ye ſtiff-necked and uncircumciſed in heart and eare, ye do always reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt. Which of the Prophets have not your Fathers perſecuted?* — He ſet home their ſin upon them, and how did they take it? *verſe* 54. *When they heard theſe things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnaſhed on him with their teeth.* So far were they from falling down, and yielding to the Conviction, that their Spirits do riſe up with indignation againſt the inſtrument that went about to convince them of their ſin. You may remember the ſtory concerning *Ahab*; he had diverſe Prophets that would not let him alone, but would be telling him of his ſin, and convincing him of his ſin; The Prophet *Elijah*, would be reproving him of his ſin; and how did his heart riſe up in indignation againſt *Elijah*; and when he met with him, he gave him ſuch a gratulation as this, *Haſt thou found me, O mine enemy?* and, *Art thou he that troubleſt Iſrael?* He could not endure to bear the Prophet *Elijah*, becauſe he troubled his Spirit by convincing him of ſin; he called him, *The troubler of the Land*; And, 1 *Kings* 22. You read of *Micaiah*, a Prophet of the Lord, and he had been very bold and plain with *Ahab*, and told him of his ſins; well, when they there were in an exigency and ſtrait, King *Ahab*, and King *Jeho-*

Jehoshaphat was to go together to Battel to *Ramoth Gilead*, *ver.* 4. and 5. and *Jehoshaphat* would have the Prophets called together, that they might advise and consult with them, whether they should go to *Ramoth-Gilead*, or no; At the *6th verse*, You read there, that *Ahab* would call four hundred Prophets together, before he would call *Micaiah*, but saith *Jehoshaphat*, *verse 7. Is there not here a Prophet of the Lord besides, that we might enquire of him? Yes, saith Ahab, there is one Micaiah, but I hate him*, why? saith he, *He never spake concerning me*: He was always grating upon his Sins, to convince him of his sins, and now his heart rises against him; this is the guise of the Soul, that is not convinced by the Spirit of God, the heart will rise up against the Instrument and Means that endeavor to convince them of sin. Whereas now on the other side, where the holy Spirit of God cometh to convince a Soul of sin, you will find the contrary; the Soul will be ready to close with the very Instrument and Means that doth convince him of sin, it will embrace and love the instrument, you may see it, *Acts* 2. When *Peter* and *John* and the Apostles dealt plainly with the people, at the 22 *verse*, say they, *Ye men of Israel hear these Words.* v. 23. *Him, being delivered by the determinate Counsel and Foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.* Say they, *Ye have killed the Son of God*; There was plain dealing, and so afterwards, and so afterwards, he tells them again, *verse* 36. *Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ.* Well, how did they bear this

this at their hands? *v.* 37. *Now, when they heard this they were pricked at their hearts, and they said unto Peter, and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and Brethren, What shall we do? Men and Brethren,* not *Enemies*, no, but *Brethren* now; Ay, when the Spirit of God convinces a soul of sin, by any Instruments, it will look at the instruments rather as Brethren, than as haters of them; they will look upon them in another manner, and give them other manner of Appellations and Greetings, *Men and Brethren.* And truly Brethren, this is a good sign that the Holy Ghost hath been at work upon the heart, in a way of conviction, when as the soul is ready to close with those that are the Means and Instruments of convincing them of sin.

That is the fourth thing whereby we may come to discern the difference between the trouble for sin, that comes from the evil Spirit, and that trouble that comes from the holy Spirit, in a way of convincing of sin.

5. *When Trouble for sin doth come from the evil Spirit, ordinarily the heart will be ready to murmur against God himself,* secretly murmur against God himself, and think that God dealeth very hardly with sinners, and very rigidly to lay such heavy punishments upon sinners for small matters, (as they are ready to think): What? afflict us here? lay such heavy punishments upon us here, for a small sin? and then inflict eternal death too, and let the wrath of God lie upon the soul for ever for sin; God deals very hardly for sin, the heart secretly rises against God, and murmurs against God for it; as if God were unrighteous and dealt

very rigidly and severely, as *Cain*, *Gen.* 4. saith he, *My Punishment is greater than I can bear*, 'tis too great a punishment. And, I remember, *Ezek.* 18. 25. The Lord complains of the people, that they were ready to murmur against him, as if his ways were not equal. *The Fathers have eaten sowre grapes, and the Childrens teeth are set on edge.* We are punished, say they, for our Fathers sins; God deals unrighteously with us, and unequally with us; that God is fain to clear himself; *I tell you*, saith God, *the Soul that sinneth, it shall dy.* And, *the Child shall not bear the punishment of his Fathers*: So they were ready to judge hardly of God, as if God were unrighteous. And so I remember, *Revel.* 16. 10, 11. *And the fifth Angel powred out his Vial upon the seat of the Beast, and his Kingdom was full of Darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain.* And what then? v. 11. *And they blasphemed the God of Heaven because of their pain, and their sores, and repented not of their Deeds.* When God comes to lay afflictions upon a soul, and sin is set home by the Devil, they will be ready to blaspheme God, at least secretly in their hearts, that God is a hard God, and deals very rigidly and severely; what, for a small matter, to lay such heavy punishments upon us here, and eternal wrath for ever? the Lord dealeth unrighteously. Whereas now on the other side, when a soul is convinced of sin, by the holy Spirit of God, the Soul is ready to justify God, though he do afflict: As I remember, *Ezra* 9. 14. saith *Ezra* there, *And whatever is come upon us for our evil Deeds, our God hath punished us less than our iniquities have deserved.* God might have laid much

much more upon us. So *Nehem.* 9.33. *Nehemiah*, and the rest there do acknowledge that the Lord was righteous in all that was come upon them. *Howbeit thou art just in all that is brought upon us, for thou hast done right* —. So I remember *David*, when God had convinced him of his sin of Murder and Adultery, *Psal.* 51. he makes that as his penitential *Psalm*, and saith he, *Verse* 4. *That thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest.* Lord, saith he, I will clear thee whatever cometh of me; this is the guise and frame of a soul, that is convinced of sin by the Spirit of God; such a Soul will justify God, and acknowledge that God is holy and righteous in all his dealings. So *Psal.* 22. 2, 3. There *David* complains, that God had shut out his prayer; *I cry night and day*, saith he, *but thou regardest not, but yet*, saith he, *thou art holy, thou art righteous still.* Thus it is with a soul that is convinced by the holy Spirit of God.

6. You shall find another difference, *When the evil Spirit convinces a Soul of Sin, and troubles the Soul about sin, you may observe there, the Soul is not troubled for sin as 'tis sin*; nor is it taken off from sin as sin, but only troubled about the effects of it, but is not taken off from sin, no not from any sin as 'tis sin; possibly such a Soul may be under restraint for a time from his sin, or possibly he will never venture upon that sin again that his Soul hath been troubled about, and his Conscience so tattered and terrified about, yet is not taken off from all sin. You know *Judas* was troubled for his sin, the Devil had drawn him into sin to betray Christ, when he had drawn him into the sin,

then the Devil falls upon his Conſcience, and drives him into deſpair, even to hang himſelf. But it is likely, if he had lived an hundred years after, he would never have done the like crime again, he would never have betrayed his Maſter again; but yet he was not taken off from ſin as ſin; (if a Soul be taken off from ſin a ſin, he will be cut off from all ſin) for you ſee he fell upon ſelf murder for all that, and upon the ſin of deſpair for all that, ſo that I ſay, ſuch a ſoul is not taken off from all ſin.

Whereas now a ſoul that is convinced by the Spirit of God, it doth cut him off from all ſin, that now a Soul doth loath and hate every ſin that he knows to be ſin, he will not meddle with it; *Pſal.* 119. ſaith *David*, *I hate every falſe way.* And, as *Ephraim* ſaith, *Hoſ.* 14.8. *What have I to do any more with Idols?* Never meddle with Idols more. Thus the Soul will be taken off from all ſin, will not venture upon any thing that is ſin. That is the ſixth.

7. Let me add one more, and that is this; *A ſoul that is under trouble for ſin, from the evil ſpirit, the trouble will in time wear off, and will be removed and healed, by ſome way or other that is not the right way of Cure.* I pray mind it; I ſay ſuch a ſoul, though it may be under a great ſtroak, a great wound for ſin, if Satan do not prevail upon the ſoul to drive it to diſpair, the wound will be healed by ſome means or other that is not the right way and means, poſſibly ſometimes it wears away by length of time, it vaniſheth and wears off by length of time, by degrees; Juſt as it is with a Land-Flood, it comes ſometimes with great

ſhowres

ſhowres and ſtorms, but it waſtes away by degrees inſenſibly; So in this caſe, you ſhall have ſome ſouls ſometimes ſo afflicted, and oppreſſed, and troubled for ſin, that they cannot reſt themſelves, nor let others reſt with them, they complain of the burthen of their ſins, what burthens they are under, and the burthen wears off by degrees, their trouble of Conſcience wears off by degrees: But how? they themſelves know not, nor their friends neither; but had it been from the Spirit of God, it would not have worn off ſo. *Ahab* was convinced of the danger he was in by the Prophet, 1 *Kings* 21. The Prophet comes to him and threatens him from the Lord, that the Judgments of God ſhould fall upon him and his poſterity *Verſe* 21. *That he would cut off all the Poſterity of Ahab, every one that piſſeth againſt the wall.* *Ahab* was now convinced and troubled in his mind, and he would fain avoid the judgment, and therefore he humbleth himſelf in ſack-cloth, he was very penitent, inſomuch as the Lord took notice of it, and told the Prophet of it, *verſe* 29. *Seeſt thou how Ahab humbleth himſelf?* So that *Ahab* was under a reſtraint for a time, for about two or three years, that he durſt not go to Battel; But look into the beginning of the next Chapter; and it is ſaid, in the third year, he would venture to go out, when the troubles were a little worn off his ſpirit, then he would venture to go out, and then he was ſlain; So, many a man or woman is under very ſore trouble of Spirit and Conſcience for ſin, and yet notwithſtanding the trouble may wear off again, and that's an argument it was not from the Spirit of God; ſometimes trouble about ſin may wear

away, it may be diverted by the multiplicity of worldly buſineſs, he may thruſt himſelf over head and years in the buſineſs of the world, and ſo poſſibly may calm and quiet his Conſcience for the preſent, and if it be not from the Spirit of God poſſibly it will never return again. You read of *Cain*, *Gen.* 4. 17. He was troubled in his ſpirit about his ſin, and he went about the matters of the world, about marrying of Wives, and building of a City, and by that means wore away his trouble, you hear no more of him. Sometimes trouble is worn off by merry Company, chearly Company, and by Muſick, and the like, and ſo drive away their ſad and melancholy humours; juſt as it was with *Saul*: We read of *Saul* when the evil Spirit was upon him, he would call for one to play upon an Inſtrument of Muſick to drive away the evil ſpirit; Ay, the trouble was from an evil ſpirit indeed, and now therefore it muſt be driven away by a fit of Muſick. Sometimes again you may be free from this trouble of ſpirit about ſin, by making reſtitution and ſatisfaction. Oh they have wronged ſuch and ſuch, and this bears them down and oppreſſes them, the very thoughts of it, and they know not what to do. Well, they will go and make reſtitution and ſatisfaction, and ſo lick themſelves whole, the trouble is over. And ſo ſometimes they will eaſe themſelves of their trouble by performance of Duties, and by the reformation of their Lives. We read of *Herod*, he was convinced of his ſin of *Inceſt* in marrying of his Brothers Wife. *John Baptiſt* convinced him of it, and told him it was not lawful for him to have his Brothers Wife; and there-

thereupon he goes to hear *John* preach, and 'tis said, he reformed many things; he set upon a work of reformation, *Mark* 6.12. *He heard John Baptist gladly, and did many things*, &c. And there was an end of his trouble. Now I say, this is that I bring it for, to shew you that trouble about sin, that comes from the evil spirit, commonly it is healed and cured by such means, as are not the right means for the cure; whereas now, a Soul that is convinced by the Spirit of God, will never be cured but by the same hand that wounded it; it will never be cured but by the right plaister, the right salve; without the blood of Christ, and the righteousness of Christ, applyed by Faith, the Soul will never be cured.

I remember a Story of Mr. *Bilney*, that was burnt here at *Lollards Pit*, without *Bishops Gate*, he tells a story of himself, and Mr. *Latimer*; this Mr. *Latimer* was a young man, a man of very pregnant parts, but he was a Papist. Now Mr. *Bilney* thought to circumvent Mr. *Latimer*, and to gain him by a wile, and so he goes to Mr. *Latimer*, pretending himself a Papist, he would make Mr. *Latimer* his Confessor, so he goes and confesses himself to him, and there he tells him how he had been troubled in mind about his sin, and so troubled, saith he, that I could find no rest nor peace, till I came to the right cure: I was set saith he, to go a Pilgrimage to such a place, but my trouble continued, and I was set to do such a Pennance, and my trouble still continued, till such time as I read in the new Testament, 1 *Tim.* 1.15. *That Jesus Christ came into the World to save sinners, whereof I am chief*; and saith he, when that was

set home upon me, then I was quiet and free from my trouble; Truly so it will be, a soul will never come to a right cure, till such time as it comes to the righteousness of Christ, and the vertue of the Blood of Jesus Christ, applyed to the soul by Faith, the soul will never come to any true peace or comfort. And thus now you have seen some differences between the trouble of a soul about sin, that comes from the evil spirit, and the convincing of a soul by the holy Spirit of God.

So now I have done with the third thing, namely, *That it is the proper Work of the Spirit to convince a Soul of sin, in order to Conversion.* There is one thing more remaining, and I shall briefly draw to an end.

4. And that is to shew you, That as Convincing of sin is the work of the Spirit, so also, *It is the first work of the Spirit, in order to Conversion and Salvation*: for so the Point was laid down, That it is the first work of the Spirit, in order to Conversion and Salvation, to convince a Soul of sin. Now how doth that appear? Briefly in two or three Words.

1. Thus, because, *The Lord in the Work of the new Creation, doth ordinarily use the same Method that he did in the old Creation. You know in the first Creation of the World, the first particular Work that God wrought was Light*, saith God, *Let there be Light, and there was Light.* Light is that whereby things are discovered, light makes things manifest; So now God comes in the new Creation, when he is about the great Work of the new Creation upon the Soul, the first thing God works in the soul is to create Light, Light whereby the soul may

may come to see and discern what is in himself, he comes to see and discern sin, saith the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. *God, that commanded Light to shine out of Darkness, hath shined into our hearts*; In the new Creation he doth cause a soul to see and discern its own unrighteousness, and there where true righteousness is to be had, the righteousness of Jesus Christ (of which we may speak afterwards, if the Lord please). He shall first convince the World of sin, and then of righteousness; but the first Work is to create Light in the soul, and such Light as to discover sin; as Christ told *Paul*, when he called him to preach the Gospel, *Acts* 26. 18. saith he, *I have sent thee to turn people from Darkness to Light.* That is the first Work commonly the Spirit doth, in order to Conversion and Salvation, to bring in a light into the soul to discover sin; the soul was in darkness before, and saw no great evil in sin, but now there is a light brought in, whereby the soul is made to see and discern sin, and so is convinced of sin.

2. It is the first Work of the Spirit in order to Conversion, to convince the soul of sin, because, *Till a Soul be convinced of sin, it will never much heed the Gospel of Grace.* Alas! the Gospel, and the glorious Grace that is held forth in the Gospel, is a very slighty thing to a carnal heart, they make a light matter of it, they do even mock at it, as a very simple foolish thing; as in *Acts* 17. When *Paul* was Preaching to the *Athenians*, say they, *What will this Babler say?* v. 18. It is but a kind of babling. So sometimes, some of your learned Doctors have counted the preaching of the Gospel but prating and babling, so v. 22. *When they heard*

of

the resurrection of the dead, some mocked —. They made a slight matter of it, and disregarded it; but now, when a soul comes to be convinced of sin, then it will be ready to attend the Gospel, the soul will then be ready to hear what God speaks in the Gospel. See that example again, *Acts* 2. You read there, those that were converted by *Peter's* Sermon, at first they did not regard what the Apostles said; say they, *These men are drunken with new wine, and they talk they know not what*; but afterward, they came to be of another mind, when *Peter* had preached to them, and the Spirit had gone along with him to convince them of sin, then, *Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* now we will hearken to you, and hear any thing you will say to us: I say, upon this account, it is the first work of the Spirit to convince the soul of sin, because the soul makes but a slight matter of the grace of God in the Gospel, till it be convinced of sin, it will make but a mocking matter of it: But when a soul comes to be convinced of sin, by the holy Spirit of God, then the Word of the Lord will be precious to him, and then we will hear thy Words for they are sweet.

3. And lastly, The Spirit doth first convince the soul of sin, in order to Conversion and Salvation, *Because till such time as a Soul be convinced of sin, the Soul is not fit to be married to Christ*; There must be first a Divorce, before there can be another marriage; if a woman be to be married the second time, she must not marry whilest her Husband lives without a Divorce, so 'tis in this case, a Soul cannot truly be married to Christ till such time as it be dead to the law of sin. The

Apostle

Apoſtle ſpeaks very elegantly to this purpoſe, *Rom. 7.1,2. Know you not Brethren: I ſpeak to them that know the Law; how the Law hath Dominion over a man ſo long as he liveth*; And ſo on. And at the 4 *v.* he comes to make Application, *Wherefore, my Brethren, ye alſo are become dead to the Law by the body of Chriſt, that ye ſhould be married to another, even to him that was raiſed from the dead.* You cannot be marryed to Chriſt, till ſuch time as you be clear from your firſt Husband, and how come we to be divorced from the Law of ſin, but by conviction of ſin; when the Spirit of the Lord comes to convince of ſin, then there is a Divorce, then the heart is taken off from ſin. Indeed (as I told you before) if the ſoul be not convinced by the Spirit, he is not convinced of ſin as ſin, but when the Spirit of the Lord comes and convinces a Soul of ſin, here is a Divorce, and now the Soul is made fit to marry with Chriſt. And ſo you have ſeen the Point opened.

Application.

Now one word or two by way of Application, and I have done.

1. Then, *Hereby we may come to diſcern, or have a near ſcantling about our ſpiritual Eſtate, whether we have had the Work of Converſion wrought in us or no.*

I ſhall ſpeak but a Word to it, and leave it to your further Conſideration. Conſider whether the firſt ſtep towards Converſion hath ever been ſet; that is, the Work of Conviction by the Spirit. Hath the Lord by his Spirit ever convinced you of ſin? hath the Spirit come and brought ſin unto

you,

you, and set it home upon you? hath the Spirit of the Lord so set home sin upon you, that you have not been able to make any evasion? for that (as you heard) is the nature of true Conviction; and hath the Spirit so set home sin upon you that your heart came to be affected with it, and afflicted for it, that you are made to humble your selves before the Lord under the sense of sin? Well, have your souls ever been thus convinced of sin or no? if not, then you have not set the first step towards Conversion. I pray mind it.

You will say, yes, I hope I have been convinced of sin, I have had some sins so set home upon me, that I could not deny it, nor avoid it, but my heart hath been greatly afflicted under it, that I could not rest day nor night, and I have been afraid I should have sunk into the bottomless pit.

But I pray consider, was this Conviction from the holy Spirit of God? you have heard there may be a trouble for sin, that may come from the evil spirit. What was it any other but the Conviction that may come from the evil spirit? yes, you will say, I hope it is from the holy Spirit of God.

For that, you may consider those seven things, that were laid down to discover when sin is set home by the holy Spirit of God, you may consider of them at your leisure, when you are in private between the Lord, and your own Souls. But let me only propound this one thing to you from them all, you say, you have been convinc'd of sin by the Spirit of God, I pray mind it, for it is that that doth concern our everlasting state, our eternal Salvation, for if the first step be not set toward our conversion,

verſion, then we cannot expect that the other ſteps are ſet, therefore I ſay, you that ſay, you hope you have been convinced of ſin by the Spirit, I pray conſider, how was your Conviction healed? how was your trouble taken off? Conſider of it between the Lord and your own Souls, you were troubled for your ſins once, but how is it taken off? did it wither away by degrees, like a land-flood, that makes a great noiſe for a time, but wears away by degrees inſenſibly? Was it ſo with you? or was your trouble taken off by making reſtitution, giving of ſatisfaction where you have wronged? or was it by reformation and performance of duties, and ſo obtained the life by your own hands (as the Prophets expreſſion is) or was it by making application of the Righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt to your Souls, in a way of faith and believing? Were you brought to that? Truly, if not, I cannot ſay, but that your Conviction of ſin might be from the evil ſpirit. Therefore conſider ſeriouſly of it, hereby we may come in ſome meaſure to diſcern about our ſpiritual Eſtate, whether the work of Converſion be effectually wrought or no: Conſider whether this firſt ſtep be ſet, namely, Convincing of ſin by the Spirit of God, and truly, if ſo be the holy Spirit have convinced you of Sin, I am apt to think, that the Spirit will never leave till it hath made thorow Work; ſaith the Apoſtle, *Philip.* 1. 6. *We are confident of this very thing, that he that hath begun a good Work in you, will certainly finiſh it to the Day of Chriſt.* And if the holy Spirit hath begun to convince you of ſin the Spirit will go on to convince

convince you of Righteouſneſs too. That is the firſt Word of Application. I have another and ſo have done.

2. *It is to exhort and perſwade you, that if ever the Work of Conviction ſhould come upon your hearts, and ſpirits, to take heed that you do not hinder it, but further it what you can.*

I confeſs it is irkſome to fleſh, and blood, our carnal hearts cannot away with this Work of Conviction, but will avoid it, and eſcape it if poſſible. But take heed you do not hinder it, but further it what you can, becauſe elſe, if it be from the holy Spirit of God, you do reſiſt the Spirit, and go about to quench the Spirit. Therefore you ſhould do, even as old *Eli* adviſed young *Samuel*, when the Lord began to call him, ſaith Eli, *When you hear the Voice again, ſay, ſpeak Lord, for thy Servant deſireth to hear.* So I ſay to you, doth any word come to your Hearts, and ſpeak to your Conſciences, in a way of Conviction of ſin, do not drive it away, do not quench it, but ſay, Speak Lord, for thy Servant deſireth to hear. And now plead with the Lord, do not now riſe up in your Spirits againſt the Inſtruments, that are means to convince you, take heed of that, but rather ly low before the Lord, and bleſs the Lord that any Word is ſpoken to you by way of Conviction, and never leave till ſuch time as you come to reſt upon Chriſt, and his Righteouſneſs, and upon the vertue of his death, whereby he hath made ſatisfaction to the Juſtice of God on the behalf of poor ſinners. I ſay, do not neglect, do

not slight, or despise, or quench, or check this Work of Conviction.

And so now I have done with this Point. The next Point is concerning the Spirits convincing of the sin of unbelief. *He shall convince the World of sin, because they believe not on me.* But thus much shall suffice for this time.

The Holy Ghoſt convinceth of Sin.

SERMON VI.

JOHN 16. 9.

Of Sin, becauſe they believe not on me.

WE have already handled one point from theſe words, which was this;

That the firſt work of the Spirit of God upon the heart, in order to Converſion, is to convince the Soul of Sin.

Chriſt ſaith here, that he would ſend the Spirit after his departure from them; ſaith he, *I will ſend the Comforter*, and this he ſpake to ſupport and comfort the hearts of his Diſciples againſt his abſence, and therefore the end of his Spirit was to cooperate with their Miniſtry, it was in order to the Converſion of Souls; this is the matter of their comfort. Now this I have ſpoken to at large before, but now to come to the ſecond Note or Point, which doth plainly lye before us, which I ſhall deſire to ſpeak ſomething to at preſent, and that is this.

Doct.

Doctrine.

That the great and special Sin that the Spirit of God doth usually convince People of in order to their Conversion, is their Unbelief, not believing on Christ.

For so saith Christ here, *He shall convince the World of Sin.* Of what Sin? He tells them of their Unbelief. *Of Sin, because they believe not on me.*

That is, the great and special Sin that the Spirit of God is wont to convince people of in order to their Salvation, namely, *their Unbelief.* It is indeed the work of the Spirit to convince of other sins, as you heard before, but yet in a special manner 'tis the work of the Spirit, to convince of this sin of Unbelief; He is said so to convince of this *Sin*, as if there were no other sins to be convinced off: he mentions no other sins; *But he shall convince the World of sin, because they believe not on me.*

And this you shall find in part verified presently after Christs Ascension into Heaven. In a few dayes after Christs Ascension into Heaven, he sent the Holy Ghost, *Acts* 2. The Holy Ghost was poured down abundantly upon the Disciples when they were met together, thereupon *Peter* preached a sermon to the People that came wondring about him, and now *Peter* had experience of what Christ here promised, saith Christ, *I will send the Spirit, and he shall convince the World of sin by your Ministry*; And at *Peters* Sermon, there was three thou- convinced at one clap, they were convinced of sin, not only of their not believing on Christ, but of their murdering of Christ, that they had Crucified

the Lord of Life; and when they heard this, then by the power of the Spirit, that went along with *Peter*'s Sermon, 'tis said, they were pricked at the heart and cryed out, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* They saw now a need of Christ, and were glad now to receive Christ, and to believe in Christ. Well, for the prosecution of this point, I shall desire briefly to speak to three things.

1. Shew you, That not Believing on Christ is a sin.

2. That it is not only a sin not to believe in Christ, but a great sin, one of the greatest sins that a soul can be guilty of.

3 That it is the work of the Spirit to convince a Soul of the sin of Unbelief.

1. Then, that Unbelief is a sin: It is that which very few are sensible of, they scarce look upon unbelief to be a sin; they look upon believing rather as their presumption, and for their not believing, they look upon it rather as their duty, as their humility. Now I say, Unbelief is a sin; Such as do not believe on Christ, they are guilty of sin. But mark, I do not say, that every one that doth not believe on Christ is guilty of the sin of Unbelief: No, but Unbelief is a sin only to them that have the Gospel preached to them, and Christ offered to them; it is a sin to them not to believe on Christ, 'tis not a sin to others; and though Heathens and Pagans shall be condemned and damned in their unbelief, yet not for their not believing on Christ. Saith Christ, *John* 15. 22. *If I had not come and spoken to them, they had not had sin*, that is, they had not had the sin of Unbelief, they had not been guilty of that sin; *but now they have no Cloak*, no excuse, *for their sin*. Look now

as

as it is with thoſe that have not the Law written, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Rom.* 2. 12, 14, 15. *They that ſin without Law, ſhall be judged without the Law*: They ſhall not be judged and condemned by the written Law, but they ſhall be judged and condemned by the Law that is written in their hearts and conſciences. So now here, thoſe that never had the Goſpel preached to them, as a great many Nations in the World, *Pagans*, *Heathens*, and *Infidels*, and *Indians*, they never had the Goſpel preached to them, Chriſt was never revealed to them, the Name of Chriſt never ſounded in their ears, now they ſhall not be condemned for their not believing on Chriſt, 'tis not a ſin to them. And therefore ſome tell us, there is a twofold Unbelief. There is a Negative or Privative Unbelief, that is the Unbelief of thoſe that never had the means of Faith offered them, and it is not a ſin for them not to believe on Chriſt, becauſe they never heard of him. But when there is a Poſitive Unbelief (as they call it) that is, the Unbelief of ſuch as live under the ſound of the Goſpel, under the hearing of Chriſt. Chriſt is preached to them, and held forth to them, and they are called upon to believe on Chriſt, and yet they believe not; this is a Poſitive unbelief, and this unbelief is a ſin: And that it is a ſin, let me give you two or three Demonſtrations.

1. It appears to be a ſin, becauſe it is the tranſgreſſion of the Moral Law, or the Law of the Ten Commandments. *Where there is no Law*, ſaith the Apoſtle *there is no Tranſgreſſion*; Sin is not imputed where there is no Law, *Rom.* 5. 13. But ſin is a tranſgreſſion of the Law, and this ſin of unbelief a tranſ-

greſſion of the Moral Law, of the firſt Commandment.

Objection.

How ſo, you will ſay? Was believing on Chriſt then commanded to *Adam* in the firſt Commandment?

Anſwer.

I Anſwer, *Yes Virtually.* The firſt Commandment you know was thus; *Thou ſhalt have no other gods before me.* That is, thou ſhalt own the true God for thy God, and no other. Now how do we own God? When we give him that worſhip that he requires of us; now the firſt Commandment requires that we ſhould worſhip God with a natural worſhip, which is due to God from us as we are his Creatures; that is comprized in the firſt Commandment; You ſhall worſhip God as God; worſhip him, How? Obey him, fear him, love him, reverence him, believe in him, put truſt and confidence in him. The firſt Commandment requires that we ſhould yield obedience to God in whatſoever is required of us; Then this is virtually required in the firſt Commandment. 'Tis our duty by virtue of the firſt Commandment to believe in Chriſt. Now if it be commanded in the Law, then our unbelief is a ſin, becauſe it is a tranſgreſſion of the Law.

Objection.

But you will ſay (a little for the clearing of this) but this was inconſiſtent with the ſtate of

Innocency, for *Adam* to believe on Christ as a Mediator, as a Saviour to save him from sin, because *Adam* was in a sinless condition, he had no guilt upon him in his Innocency, it was then inconsistent with *Adams* state to believe on Christ as a Mediator and Saviour, then it seems *Adam* had no power to believe on Christ, and if so, then certainly not believing on Christ, is not a transgression of the first Commandment.

Answer.

For Answer to it let me briefly clear this in two things.

1. It is granted, it is true, that it was inconsistent with *Adams* state of Innocency to rely upon Christ, and to believe on Christ as a Saviour to save him from sin, for he had no sin, he was Innocent, therefore it was inconsistent with his state to believe on Christ as a Saviour; yea, it was inconsistent with the wisdom of God to require *Adam* to believe on Christ, to command such a duty of *Adam*; yet notwithstanding, (mark I pray) *Adam* had a principle, and a virtual power for to have believed on Christ, if God had required it of him; Though its true it was inconsistent with his state, that God shou'd require it of him, yet *Adam had this principle*, this virtual power put into him with his first Creation, in the image of God, *He had this power put into him, that he had a virtual power to obey God in every thing that he should require of him*, whatever God should reveal to be his will, he had power to believe it, and yield obedience to it: Though it is true it was inconsistent with his State actually to believe, yet he had a power to have believed

Does any thing but a bad State of Q. keep sinners from believing in Christ?

on Christ, if God had required it of him. For *Adam* had a power to do that which was inconsistent with his state of innocency, as for example, *Adam had a Principle and virtual Power to shew Mercy and Compassion to any that were in misery, but that was inconsistent with his state, for there was none in misery then.* There was no need of the Compassion of *Adam*, yet *Adam* had a principle, a virtual power to have done this; so in this case, though 'tis true, believing on Christ as a Saviour was inconsistent with his state, yet he had a principle, and virtual power to have believed on Christ as a Saviour if God had required it of him, *Or else it were not our sin now not to believe on Christ, if there were never a power given to Adam in the state of innocency to have believed, if God had required it of him, for we are now condemned for not believing on Christ, the power being once given us: Though we have lost the power*, yet that doth not excuse us for the sin of Unbelief. That is one Answer. But

2. Though it is true, Believing on Christ was not expressly required in the first Commandment, yet notwithstanding, *It was and is implicitly required*, namely thus, It was and is required in the first Commandment, that we should yield obedidience of faith to whatever God should require of us; now then, though Believing on Christ was not expressly required and commanded, yet notwithstanding believing on Christ was implicitly required, thus, that when ever God should reveal and make Christ known to us, when ever God should command us to believe on Christ, this was required that we are bound by vertue of the

the first Commandment to believe on Christ, though 'tis true it was inconsistent with that state, yet notwithstanding it is implicitly required in the first Commandment, as to instance, You know Gospel-Worship, or the Worship that God requireth now in the Gospel, it is inconsistent with that Worship that God required in the time of the Law, yet notwithstanding, Gospel-Worship was implicitly required in the second Commandment; now 'tis true, Gospel-Worship is not expressed in the second Commandment, yet notwithstanding it is virtually implyed, because we are bound by virtue of that Commandment, to worship God with that Worship which God should institute or appoint; God hath now appointed Gospel-Worship under the new Testament, and by vertue of the second Commandment, we are bound to yield obedience to it now, though it was inconsistent with the Worship in the time of the Law. So the fourth Commandment requires that we should keep holy the Sabbath Day, the express letter of the Commandment is to sanctify the seventh day from the Creation; now that we should keep the first day of the Week for the Sabbath, under the Gospel, this is not expressed in the fourth Commandment; yet it is implicitly required, namely, that we should keep holy that seventh day that God hath appointed, or should appoint: If God do change the seventh day to the first day of the Week, still by vertue of the fourth Commandment, we are bound to sanctify and celebrate the first day of the week for the Sabbath: so now in this case, though the first Commandment did not expresly require our faith in Christ, yet implicity

we are bound by vertue of that Commandment, to yield obedience of faith to whatever God ſhould reveal or make known to us, or command us to believe any time afterward. So that now, if our believing on Chriſt be required in the firſt Commandment, then unbelief is a tranſgreſſion of the firſt Commandment, and ſo a Sin. This is the firſt Demonſtration.

2. It appears to be a ſin, namely becauſe, *Not believing on Chriſt, is a Tranſgreſſion of the Commandment of the Goſpel*, Not only a Tranſgreſſion of the firſt Table of the Law, but it is a Tranſgreſſion of the great Commandment of the Goſpel. Brethren, the Goſpel is a Law, it is called the law of faith, *Rom.* 2.27. *Where then is Boaſting? it is excluded, by what Law? of Works, nay, but by the Law of faith*, What is that? that is the Goſpel. The Goſpel is the Law of Faith, wherein God requires our faith and believing on Chriſt, and therefore faith is called the *Obedience of Faith*, Rom. 16. 26. *But now is it made manifeſt by the Scriptures of the Prophets, according to the Commandment of the everlaſting God made known to all Nations for the Obedience of faith.* That is, that the Nations ſhould believe on Chriſt, and ſo yield obedience to the Goſpel by believing; it is the Command of the Goſpel, therefore, now not believing on Chriſt is a tranſgreſſion of a Goſpel Command. Where doth the Goſpel command our believing on Chriſt expreſly? why every where, to name but a place or two. *John* 6.29. ſaith Chriſt, *This is the Work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath ſent*; This is the work of God, not only the work that God worketh in us,

that

that is not the meaning of the place, but this is the Work that God requires and commands, the ſpecial work and duty that God requires, that you ſhould believe on the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt. And you have a more expreſs place, 1 *John* 3.23. *This is his Commandment, that ye believe on the Name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt*: This is the great Commandment of the Goſpel, that we ſhould believe on the name of Jeſus Chriſt, therefore now not to believe on Chriſt, being commanded in the Goſpel, is a tranſgreſſion of the Commandment of the Goſpel, and the tranſgreſſion of a Goſpel Command is a ſin as well as any tranſgreſſion of the ten Commandments. Now believing on Chriſt being expreſly required in the Goſpel, unbelief is a tranſgreſſion of the Command of the Goſpel, and therefore it is a ſin: That is the ſecond Demonſtration.

3. Not believing on Chriſt appears to be a ſin, though we make nothing of it, becauſe, *God doth inflict puniſhments for not believing on Chriſt.* God doth puniſh men for not believing on Chriſt. Now God doth never inflict puniſhment for that which is no ſin; puniſhment properly is the conſequent and effect of ſin, where there is no ſin, there is no puniſhment therefore when God takes away the guilt of ſin in Juſtification, then God pardons a ſoul, the ſoul is free from all puniſhment for ſin. There is therefore no condemnation, no real puniſhment for ſin to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus. Now then that God doth puniſh for unbelief, though not total unbelief, it is apparent. You know *Moſes* was puniſhed for not believing, and honouring of God by believing, at the Waters *Meriba*,

Meriba, Numb. 20.12. *And the Lord ſpake unto Moſes and Aaron, becauſe ye believed me not to ſanctify me in the Eyes of the Children of Iſrael, therefore ye ſhall not bring this Congregation into the Land which I have given them.* *Moſes* pleaded hard with God, that he might go over and ſee the good Land; ſaith the Lord, ſpeak no more of it, I will not hear you in this thing, you ſhall ſee it indeed but you ſhall not enter into it becauſe you did not honour me by believing. God puniſhes unbelief, and therefore unbelief muſt be a ſin; and ſo the Iſraelites, for their unbelief God did puniſh them, *Pſal.* 78.32,33. *For all this they ſinned ſtill, and believed not for his wondrous works*, and what follows? *therefore their days did he conſume in vanity, and their years in trouble.* Therefore God puniſhed them for their unbelief. So *Heb.* 3.17,18,19. ſaith the Apoſtle there, *But with whom was he grieved fourty years? was it not with them that had ſinned?* why? what was their ſin? was it not unbelief? *and to whom ſware he, that they ſhould not enter into his reſt, but to them that believed not?* So we ſee that they could not enter in becauſe of unbelief; ſo that God doth puniſh unbelief, 2 *Theſſ.* 1.8. *Chriſt ſhall come in flaming fire to render vengeance on them that obey not the Goſpel*; Now what is obedience to the Goſpel, but believing on Chriſt, which is the great Command of the Goſpel. They ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting vengeance that do not obey the Goſpel. Therefore thoſe things do evidently demonſtrate that not believing on Chriſt is a ſin. That is the firſt: But,

2. Unbelief is not only a ſin, *But it is a very great*

great ſin, It is one of the greateſt ſins, one of the ſpecial ſins of all other ſins. It is the Saying of a Reverend Holy Man, ſaith he, *The Sin of Unbelief, it is a greater ſin than Adultery, than Blaſphemy, than Murder, than Sodomy, nay*, ſaith he, *'tis greater than all theſe ſins put them all together.* And methinks, Chriſt here in the Text expreſſing and making mention of this one ſin, above all other ſins that the Spirit ſhall convince the World of, doth evidence the greatneſs of this ſin; when Chriſt ſaith, *He ſhall convince the World of ſin*, he doth not ſay he ſhall convince the World of Murder, or Adultery, or Sodomy, or Blaſphemy — but of *Unbelief*, he only mentions this to imply, that this is the moſt provoking ſin of all, and ſo Chriſt ſpeaks, *John* 15. 22. *If I had not come and ſpoken to them, they had not had ſin*, they had had no guilt of ſin at all, in compariſon of this ſin of unbelief, if Chriſt had not come and preached the Goſpel to them, they had not had ſin, that is, no guilt at all in compariſon of this guilt of not believing on Chriſt, this is the ſin of all ſins, this not believing on Chriſt when he is preached and ſet forth. And how doth that appear?

To make it a little out that not believing on Chriſt when the Goſpel is preached and Chriſt is tendered, and held forth, that now not to believe on Chriſt is a very great and ſpecial ſin, one of the greateſt of all other ſins. Though for the generality thoſe that do look upon unbelief as a ſin, yet they look upon it but as a ſmall matter, and they are but little humbled for the ſin of unbelief, they can be humbled for other ſins, and acknowledge other ſins, but as for this ſin of unbelief, it

is

is very rarely laid to heart in any manner, as it ought to be, becauſe people do not look at this ſin of unbelief as the great ſin, as the ſin above all other ſins. Now a little to demonſtrate this, that if the Lord pleaſe by his Spirit to go along and concur with it, we may be convinced of the greatneſs of this ſin, or elſe 'tis not all I can ſay can convince us of the greatneſs of this Sin.

1. It appears from hence that the ſin of unbelief is a great ſin, namely, *From the greatneſs of the Puniſhment that God doth inflict upon men for this ſin.* God doth puniſh all ſin, but now as for the Sin of unbelief, God doth viſit that, and puniſh that with the greateſt puniſhment, and that argues 'tis a great ſin: God is a righteous and juſt God, and he never puniſheth a ſin beyond what it deſerves, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 2.6. *He renders to every man according to his works.* Now he renders to unbelievers (to them that do not yield obedience of faith to the Goſpel, that are not brought by the Goſpel to believe on Chriſt) he doth render vengeance with a witneſs unto them, as the Apoſtle ſaith, 2 *Theſſ.* 1. 8. *Chriſt ſhall come in flaming fire*, Chriſt will appear all in a light fire, *to render vengeance upon them that obey not the Goſpel*; he doth not ſay to render vengeance upon them that are adulterous or unclean (though he will render vengeance to them) but here will be the vengeance of all vengeance to them that live under the Goſpel, and have been intreated and perſwaded to accept of Chriſt, and do refuſe it, he ſhall come in flaming fire to render vengeance to them. *Mat.* 11. 22. 24. Chriſt is there upbraiding thoſe places where he had been preaching the Goſpel,

Gospel, and they had not received it, *Verse* 21. *Wo unto thee Chorazin, Wo unto thee Bethsaida, Wo unto thee Capernaum*, Those were the places that had been lifted up to heaven in regard of the means of Salvation, Christ came himself, and preached the Gospel to them, but now saith Christ, *Wo unto you, I tell you, it shal be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of Judgment than for you*; You know *Sodom* was given to most desperate and abominable wickedness, the sin of Sodomy had its name from *Sodom*, and God did visit the sin of Sodom with an exemplary Judgment from Heaven, fire and brimstone from Heaven, and *Sodom* went down into Hell: Ay, but saith Christ, their Hell will be a lighter Hell, a lesser Hell, a more tolerable Hell, than the Hell of those that have lived under the Gospel, under the preaching of the Gospel, where Christ hath been revealed and held forth, and yet have not yielded obedience of faith; I tell you, saith Christ, *It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha, in the day of Judgment, than for those places.* And I remember what Christ spake in the Parable, *Luke* 12.46. about that Servant that said in his heart, *My Lord delayeth his coming*, and thereupon fell to eating, and drinking, and abusing his fellow-servants, *The Lord of that Servant will come in a day that he looketh not for him, and in an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with unbelievers*, he doth not say he will appoint him his portion with murderers and unprofitable Servants, but amongst unbelievers, as if the portion of unbelievers was the greatest portion of wrath of all others

others, he will appoint him his portion with unbelievers. Brethren, from the very vengeance and punishment that God doth visit and punish unbelief withall, we may easily conclude and gather, that unbelief is one of the greatest sins.

2. That unbelief is such a great sin (and Oh! that the Lord would open our Eyes, that we may see it and be made sensible of it), it appears, (though people are least sensible of it) *Because it is that which doth cast the greatest reproach upon God of all other sin*, It casts the greatest reproach upon the God of truth, it strikes at the very Being of God, though people do not consider it; I say, unbelief, or not believing on Christ, it strikes at the very Being of God, he is a God of Truth: Truth is the very essential Property of God, it is his very Being, his very Essence, for he is a God of Truth, and in comparison of him, all men in the World are liars, *Let God be true, and every man a liar*, Rom. 3.4. He is so infinitely true, that he is Truth it self; and it is impossible for him to lie, as the Apostle saith, *Tit.* 2. God must cease to be God, if any untruth should be found in him; and yet now mark, Unbelief doth cast so great a reproach upon God, as to say, God is a liar; You have it expressly, 1 *John* 5. 10, 11. *He that believeth not on the Son of God, hath made God a liar, because he believeth not the record that God hath given of his Son*; Now what is the record that God hath given of his Son? *Verse* 11. *This is the Record that God hath given to us, Eternal Life, and this Life is in his Son.* Here is the Record, that God from Heaven doth hold forth in the Gospel, here is eternal life, and Salvation to be had

had through Jeſus Chriſt to every one that doth believe; this is the great Truth that the Goſpel doth hold forth, now ſuch as do not receive this Truth and Teſtimony, Unbelievers that remain in their unbelief, they go on every day to make God a liar.

Queſtion.

But you will ſay, how do we by unbelief make God a liar?

Anſwer.

How? briefly thus, When a Soul goes on notwithſtanding God holds forth this Record, that here is Eternal Life to be had by believing on Chriſt, this is the great Truth that God doth bear witneſs to in the Goſpel, now when people do no more regard this ſo great Truth, though it be daily held forth to them, yet they regard it no more than they do the Words of one that they know to be an arrant Liar. Now one that is known to be a liar, if he ſhould promiſe a man never ſo much, he would make no great matter of it, he promiſeth to furniſh him with mony at his need — but he doth not truſt to it, he knows he is a liar, and therefore he is fain to provide for himſelf, as well as he can. Thus it is, God doth promiſe eternal life to the ſoul that doth accept of Jeſus Chriſt, if you will believe on Chriſt here is eternal life for you, this is the great Truth that God doth bear witneſs to in the Goſpel, now this Goſpel is preached, and publiſhed, and proclaimed. Now when people have no more regard to this great Truth of the Goſpel, than they

they have to the words of a liar, then they make God a liar; they say this is a lie, let God say what he will, I will not believe a word of it, but we will look for salvation another way, we will shift for our selves as well as we can by our own duties and services, we will find the life in our own hands; so long as any poor soul goes on in a course of unbelief, he goes on continually to say that God is a liar. O Brethren! would it not make your ears tingle, and your hearts ake, to hear a man go up and down the streets, saying, God is a liar, I will not believe one word that he saith; you would say, if the man were in his wits, it is pity that he is suffered to live, thus to blaspheme the true God; Why truly, this is the case and course of every one that lives under the Gospel, under this Record that God doth bear concerning Jesus Christ, and eternal life to be had in him, and yet they go on in a course and state of unbelief, and make nothing of all this, they do proclaim and say that God is a liar, and I do not believe one word that he saith what desperate and horrible blasphemy is this? It may be you make no great matter of this, but notwithstanding thus it is, the Holy Ghost saith, *He that believeth not the Record that God hath given of his Son, he makes God a liar.* And is not this a great sin? to strike at the very Being of God; for if God be not a God of Truth, he must cease to be God.

That is the second Demonstration, That Unbelief as it is a sin, so it is the greatest of sins. But then,

3. Unbelief appears to be a great sin, Because it is that whereby people do despise with the greatest

despite

despite the greatest kindness and favour that God can shew to poor creatures; they do as it were spurn and kick away the kindness of God, with a spurn of the foot. God in the Gospel doth hold forth the greatest kindness, and favour, that can be shown to poor sinners, he offers to them life and salvation, peace, and pardon, and reconciliation. — Now for persons not to regard this, O! it is a despising with the greatest despite, the highest kindness and favour that God can shew to poor sinners. I pray do but consider three or four things, that you may see what a high contempt it is of the greatest kindness that can be shown to poor creatures.

1. Consider but the State and Condition of those to whom God doth offer and tender his Grace in the Gospel? What are they to whom God proclaims his Gospel, and offers pardon, and reconciliation, and peace, and life, and salvation? Who are they? A company of poor condemned creatures, that are under the sentence of eternal death and condemnation, poor hopeless, and helpless, undone creatures; We are all under a sentence of eternal death continually, so long as we are in a state of unbelief. *The soul that sinneth it shall dy*; God hath pronounced this sentence upon every sinners head; Now that God should offer and tender, and shew himself ready to shew kindness unto poor undone creatures, poor condemned creatures, condemned to eternal death, and for such poor creatures to slight this kindness, Is not this a sin and provocation with a witness? Is it not a great kindness for a King to shew such favour to a poor condemned creature, that is ready,

to the Gallows, if the King ſhould ſend him his pardon? It would be counted a kindneſs and a favour indeed. Truly Brethren, we are all condemned creatures, ſentenced to eternal death, now that God ſhould be pleaſed to have any intendment of good will and favour towards ſuch as we are, eſpecially if you conſider the ſtate of Angels, that fell, and are under a ſentence of eternal condemnation, that God ſhould leave them hopeleſs, and helpleſs for ever, paſs by them, and ſhew favour to poor ſinful mankind, here is a favour and kindneſs indeed: We might all have periſhed, and God had loſt nothing at all, he had been infinitely glorious and juſt for ever. And then again.

2. Conſider how God hath ſet his infinite Wiſdom on work to contrive and find out a way, to manifeſt his goodneſs and favour to poor ſinners, which all the Angels in Heaven could never have done, that there ſhould be a way found out to ſave ſinners, that have infinitely offended and wronged the juſtice of God, and yet the juſtice of God not ſuffer! here is the infinite wiſdom of God ſet on work to find out this way. Brethren, there was a great deal of the Wiſdom of God ſeen in the contrivance of the World, and of the creatures, framing of the Creation. Saith the Pſalmiſt, ſpeaking of the creatures, *In Wiſdom haſt thou made them all*, Pſal. 104. 24. Ay, there is much of the Wiſdom of God ſeen in the creation of the World. *The Heavens declare the Glory of God*, Ay, but Brethren, in the work of the redemption of loſt man, ſhewing grace, and favour, and kindneſs to poor undone creatures as we are, herein appears the manifold Wiſdom of God. *Eph.* 3. 10.

To

To the intent that now, unto the Principalities and Powers in heavenly places might be made known by the Church the manifold Wisdom of God. Here was Wisdom and manifold Wisdom, Wisdom upon Wisdom, to find out a way for God to shew kindness and favour to poor condemned creatures as we are. And then

3. Consider further that you may see the kindness of God about the salvation of man. Consider that God should make it known that he is freely and fully willing to save undone creatures, that he is willing to save any poor sinner that is willing to venture on Christ, to lay hold on him by Faith; it was the great intendment of God in sending his Son from Heaven to be made a man, and to be made under the Law, and to suffer the wrath and Curse of God for the transgression of the Law, to make peace and attonement for sinners, here is now the manifold Wisdom of God, the wonderful Wisdom of God, and that God should reveal this, and make this known unto poor sinners, that God is freely willing and fully willing that poor sinners find grace in his sight, that they might have pardon and reconciliation, whosoever they be that will believe on Christ, and accept of him. And not only so, But

4. Consider that God should send his Servants, and Messengers about, up and down the World, for that end, that he might shew favour and kindness to poor sinners, he sends them in his name to publish and proclaim his Grace, to make known his everlasting Gospel unto poor sinners. *Go*, saith Christ, *Mark* 16.16. *Preach the Gospel*, and tell them, *He that believeth shall be saved, and be*

that believeth not, ſhall be damned. There will be his puniſhment. Now Brethren put all theſe together, here is kindneſs and grace indeed; that God ſhould have favour for poor undone ſinful creatures as we are, that are ſentenced to eternal death, and that he ſhould come and offer it and tender it as he doth. Now conſider what a ſin it is, not to receive it, not to embrace it, and accept of it, but to ſlight it, and refuſe and deſpiſe it, as every unbeliever doth. God comes and offers eternal life and ſalvation in the Goſpel, if you will receive it, you ſhall be ſaved; if you do venture your ſouls upon it, you ſhall be eternally ſaved: now for poor creatnres, as it were, to kick this away with the foot, to ſpurn at this grace and kindneſs of God, to caſt it behind your back as not worthy the regarding, you will ſay, certainly, this cannot be but a very great and high provocation: As now, ſuppoſe, the King ſhould ſend a pardon to a poor condemned Maleſactor, and he ſhould take the pardon, and caſt it behind his back; you will ſay this mans caſe is very ſad. This is the caſe of every unbelieving ſoul; the pardon that God offers in the Goſpel, he makes a very wiſp of it, and caſts it behind his back. Now conſider, if this be not a ſin; doth not this deſerve condemnation with a witneſs? *This is the condemnation,* — That is the third.

4. Let me name one more, that if the Lord pleaſe to open our Eyes, we may ſee a little more into the evil of this ſin of unbelief. *Our not believing on Chriſt, is the higheſt Contempt put upon the eternal Son of God that can be;* In refuſing and ſlighting of Chriſt, we trample upon the Blood

of

of the infinite, and eternal, and beloved Son of God. You will ſay, that is a ſin with a witneſs indeed, if a man ſhould have taken the Blood of Chriſt, that ran out of his ſide, and ſtampt it under his feet in diſdain and contempt, you will ſay, that mans ſin is a very great ſin. Brethren, thoſe that have Jeſus Chriſt offered, and tendered to them, (as Jeſus Chriſt is tendered and offered to every ſinner that ſits under the Goſpel) there is his Blood offered and tendered to us; now if we refuſe it, we do as it were trample upon the very Blood of the Son of God. 'Tis the expreſſion of the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 10.29. *Who have trodden under foot the Son of God,* They trample the very Blood of the Son of God under their feet. Brethren, Jeſus Chriſt in the Goſpel comes and tenders himſelf, he tenders his Blood, the price and merit of his Blood, here is peace, here is pardon and reconciliation with God, here is eternal life and ſalvation, the very price of my Blood. Now for us to make nothing of all this, to make no more of the Blood of Chriſt, than we would do of the Blood of a Beaſt, certainly this cannot but be a very high Provocation. I remember the Parable, *Mat.* 21. of a Vineyard that was let out to Tenants, ſo the Maſter of the Vineyard ſent in ſeaſon for the fruit of his Vineyard: well, 'tis ſaid, *v.* 31. *The husbandmen took his Servants and beat one, and killed another, and ſtoned another; at laſt ſaith the Maſter of the Vineyard, I will ſend my Son, they will reverence my Son*; and at *v.* 38. *When they ſaw the Son, they uſed him as deſpitefully and ſhamefully as the other.* What ſhall become of thoſe huſbandmen that inſtead of reverencing his Son, they

caſt him out of the Vineyard and ſlew him? 'Tis ſaid, *v.* 40. *When the Lord of the Vineyard comes he will miſerably deſtroy thoſe husbandmen.* Why, Brethren, this is the caſe of every unbelieving ſoul, the Son of God comes and tenders his Blood, here is my hearts blood, the price of my Blood which I have ſhed, he tenders it to us to accept of it, to accept of peace, and pardon, and ſalvation, which is the price of my Blood, and we make no account of it, is not this a high provocation? and do we not deſerve to be miſerably deſtroyed?

So now you have ſeen the ſecond thing opened, *That unbelief is not only a ſin, but it is a great ſin; one of the greateſt ſins of all others,* And O! that we had eyes to ſee it. But then,

3. *Thirdly,* To ſhew you, that it is the work of the Spirit in order to Converſion, to convince a Soul, as of other ſins, ſo eſpecially of this great ſin of unbelief. I ſhall briefly name two or three things to ſhew you what the Spirit doth in order to the convincing of the ſoul of this great ſin of unbelief, you ſhall find uſually that the Spirit in convincing a ſoul of unbelief, in order to converſion and eternal ſalvation, it uſually doth theſe three things.

1. *The Spirit doth come and reveal to the Soul the great evil of the ſin of unbelief,* ſets it before the ſoul, and makes it to ſee it, therefore the Spirit is called the Spirit of Revelation, becauſe it doth reveal the Goſpel, and the great ſin that is againſt the Goſpel. *Eph.* 1.17. *That God would give unto you the Spirit of Wiſdom and Revelation.* Brethren, it is not natural Conſcience that can convince a man of the ſin of unbelief. A natural

Conſci-

Conſcience may poſſibly help to convince a ſoul of other ſins, it may check the ſoul for other ſins, as Murder or Blaſphemy, — For indeed a natural Conſcience is ready to accuſe of ſin, *Rom.* 2. 15. *Their Conſciences in the mean while, excuſing or accuſing one another.* Natural Conſcience may accuſe for ſome ſins, but not for this ſin of unbelief. The Law may help a ſoul to be convinced of ſome ſins that are expreſly againſt the Law, but the law cannot convince any man or woman of unbelief, no, though 'tis true as I ſaid before, *That believing on Chriſt is virtually required in the firſt Commandment*, yet it is not expreſly commanded, but only implicitly, and virtually, therefore it is not in the power of the law of the Commandments to help to convince a ſoul of the ſin of unbelief, no more than the ſecond Commandment is a means and inſtrument to convince us of our neglect of Goſpel worſhip, becauſe it is not expreſly commanded there but implicitly and conſequentially; Therefore I ſay it muſt be the work of the Spirit alone, to convince of the ſin of unbelief. The Law and Conſcience may help to convince the Soul of other ſins, but none but the Spirit of God can convince the ſoul of the evil of the ſin of unbelief. This is the firſt thing that the Spirit doth in the ſoul, in order to the convincing of it of the ſin of unbelief, namely, to open the eyes of the underſtanding, and to reveal and diſcover to the ſoul, the evil that is in the ſin of unbelief.

2. *Another work of the Spirit in order to it is this, namely, to cauſe the Soul to underſtand and know plainly that all his beſt duties and ſervices that he can perform in this World cannot be acceptable*

unto God, nor make his person acceptable without faith in Christ. Truly this now is the work of the Spirit to convince a Soul of this, to discover this, that it is not all my duties, and services, and performances, that can procure my acceptance with God without faith in Christ. Brethren, this the Holy Ghost speaks in Scripture, and this the Holy Ghost makes a soul sensible of, *That without faith it is impossible to please God.* The soul, it may be, is ready to think that he can please God with the performance of duties and services,— But when the Spirit of God comes to convince the soul of the sin of unbelief, it shews him that all these things are not pleasing to God, but are displeasing to him without faith in Christ; neither our persons, nor any thing we can do, can be accepted of God without faith; *Eph.* 1.6. saith the Apostle, *Wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved,* Our persons are accepted in the Beloved, and our services are accepted in the Beloved, in Christ, and through Christ; otherwise nothing can be accepted and pleasing to God that we can do; and hereby now, by the operations of the Spirit, the Soul comes to see the sad and miserable Estate of unbelief. That is the second.

3. *Another Work that the Spirit doth in order to convince a Soul of the Sin of Unbelief, is this; namely, to cause the Soul to see plainly, that it hath been out of the Way of Salvation all this time.* The Soul hath gone on it may be in a course of duties, and services, and performances, it hath been careful and strict to walk exactly, to wrong no body, to be diligent in its calling, to be careful in all its dealings, to be abundant in duties and services,

giving

giving attendance to the Word, waiting upon God in every Ordinance. The Soul goes on in this way, and thinks now it is in a way of salvation. I would not discourage and dishearten any from going on in such a way, but still without faith this is not the way, we are out of the way of salvation, and we are all of us naturally enclined to seek for salvation in this way, in walking exactly, and being conscientious in the performance of duties, and being diligent in our vocations and callings, this was the way wherein the poor Israelites did miscarry, and perish. Saith the Apostle, *Rom.* 9. 30, 31. *What shall we say, that the Gentiles which followed not after Righteousness, have attained to Righteousness: but Israel which followed after the Law of Righteousness, hath not attained to the Law of Righteousness; wherefore? because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the Works of the Law.* Ay, they went about, saith the Apostle, to establish their own righteousness, and so would not submit to the Righteousness of God. They went about to establish their own Righteousness; truly this is natural to every one, to walk on in the way of the Covenant of Works, to look for life in that way that *Adam* should have found life in if he had continued in his obedience; I say, 'tis natural for every one to walk on in such a course, to expect eternal life and salvation in that way, whereas when the Spirit of God comes to convince a Soul of the sin of unbelief, it makes the soul to see it hath been out of the way of life and salvation all this time; I have taken a wrong course all this time, and now the Soul begins to be amazed to think he hath lost all his time and all his labour,

and

and now the Soul ſees that this is not the way to life and ſalvation, but the way of ſalvation is in the way of believing on Chriſt, and now the ſoul is ſet in that way and courſe of believing on Chriſt, and this is the Word behind us, which the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaks of, *Iſa.* 30. 21. *Thou ſhalt hear a voice behind thee, ſaying, this is the way walk in it.* The Spirit of the Lord comes and whiſpers in our ear, and tells us this is the way of life and ſalvation, you will never find life by your own doings, but this is the way walk in it, if you would find life. Thus the Holy Ghoſt doth ordinarily thoſe three things in order to the convincing a Soul of the ſin of unbelief. So now you have heard the Point opened and cleared. Now to make a little Application in a word or two, and ſo I have done.

Application. 1.

Hence we may ſee the reaſon why ſo many Profeſſors do ſee ſo little evil in the ſin of unbelief, why and whence is it that ſo many Profeſſors are ſo little ſenſible of the ſin of unbelief; though unbelief be ſuch a great ſin, the greateſt of all ſins, as you have heard, though it be ſuch a ſin as to make God a liar, and it doth kick and ſpurn away the loving kindneſs of God, and by our not believing we put the greateſt contempt upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt the Son of God that can be, yet I fear there are very few Chriſtians do really and truly ſee the greatneſs of this ſin, they can be humbled for other ſins, and confeſs how they have provoked God by ſlighting and deſpiſing his Word, by being

being formal and careleſs and wanton,— and prophaning Sabbaths and Ordinances,— but this ſin of unbelief is little laid to heart, there is little real humiliation for that, and what is the reaſon? becauſe it is the work of the Spirit of Chriſt only to convince of this ſin. And therefore as we do deſire more and more to ſee the evil of this ſin of unbelief, truly we had need to look up for the Spirit to diſcover it to us, that all that we can do can never pleaſe God, unleſs we do believe on Chriſt, whatever prayers we make, whatever duties we perform, yet all doth not pleaſe God, but we muſt be accepted only by faith in Chriſt, and it is the work of the Spirit to ſhew us how we have been out of the way of ſalvation all this time; I have gone on in a courſe of duties and performances in a way of moral Righteouſneſs, but I have been out of the way of life and ſalvation all this time. If the Spirit do not convince us, we ſhall never be convinced of this ſin of unbelief, it is not all that I have ſpoken, nor all that all the Saints in the World can ſpeak in laying open this ſin of unbelief, that can convince us of it, except the Spirit of the Lord come and convince of this ſin of unbelief. Therefore look up for the Spirit, and wait for the Spirit to be given out to convince us of this ſin of unbelief. That is the firſt.

2. To end all, hereby we may come in ſome meaſure to diſcern our ſpiritual eſtate and condition, whether we be in a way of ſalvation or no, Brethren, you may ſee it plainly in the Text, ſaith Chriſt, *I will ſend the Spirit, and he ſhall convince the World of ſin*, of this ſin of unbelief in order to ſalvation. Well then, Conſider, I pray

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ſeriouſly between the Lord and your own ſouls, whether or no you have been convinced of ſin, and eſpecially of this ſin of unbelief, hath the Holy Ghoſt diſcovered the evil of this ſin to you? I pray conſider ſeriouſly of it, for this is the work of the Spirit in order to ſalvation to convince of this ſin of unbelief.

Objection.

You will ſay, Well, I hope the Lord hath been at work upon my ſoul, I hope the Spirit hath been convincing me of ſin, I think I have been convinced of many ſins, I hope the Spirit hath made me to ſee my original ſin, and hath convinced me of the ſins of my youth, the Lord hath written bitter things againſt me, and made me to poſſeſs the iniquities of my youth, he hath brought to my remembrance how I have been diſobedient to my Parents and Superiors, the Spirit, I ſuppoſe, hath convinced me, that I have been given to lying, to purloining, defrauding, and ſtealing, from Parents and Maſters, and I have been convinced of Sabbath-breaking, *&c.*—

Anſwer.

But I pray conſider, have you ever been convinced of this ſin of unbelief; I pray conſider it ſeriouſly, what of the evil of unbelief hath the Spirit diſcovered to you? I tell you Brethren, if ſo be you have not been convinced and ſeen ſomething of the evil of unbelief, truly you have cauſe to queſtion whether ever the Spirit of God hath been at work upon you in order to ſalvation. Let

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me tell you plainly, and I pray bear with me, you may have been convinced of sin, and yet the Spirit hath never been at work upon you in order to salvation. No, when the Spirit doth work in order to salvation, it doth sooner or later convince of this sin of unbelief. Therefore if you be perswaded that the Spirit hath been at work upon your hearts in convincing you of sin in order to salvation, then wait for it, and look that the Spirit shall discover this sin of unbelief to you; wait for it, for the Spirit will go on if he have begun a convincing Work in order to salvation, and eternal life, he wil convince you of the evil of unbelief sooner or later, you will be brought in some measure to see the real evil and sinfulness of it, therefore look and wait for it, and then also wait for the work of the Spirit to convince you of Righteousness, for so it follows in the next words; *I will send the Spirit, and when he is come, he shall convince the World of Sin, because they believe not on me; And of Righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye see me no more.* But thus much shall suffice for this time.

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The Holy Ghoſt revealeth Chriſt's Righteouſneſs.

SERMON VII.

JOHN 16. 10.

Of Righteouſneſs, becauſe I go to my Father, and ye ſee me no more.

YOU have heard before, That the firſt work of the Spirit of God upon the Soul, in order to Converſion and Salvation, is to convince it of Sin, and in a ſpecial manner of the ſin of Unbelief. *And when he is come, he ſhall convince the World* (ſaith Chriſt, in the former Verſe) *of Sin: Becauſe they believe not on me.* Now then, where the Spirit begins to work in order to Salvation by convincing of ſin, he goes on alſo to convince of Righteouſneſs: And ſo I ſhall fall immediately upon the Point before us, which is this,

Doctrine.

That when the Spirit of God doth begin to work upon a Soul, in order to Salvation, by convincing it of Sin, he goes on alſo to convince it of Righteouſneſs.

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When he is come, he shall convince the World of Sin, saith Christ; Ay, but he doth not stop there, but goes on also to convince of *Righteousness.* Brethren, it is the first work of the Spirit of Christ to convince us of our own Unrighteousness, and his next work is to convince us of the Righteousness of Jesus Christ.

I confess I had it in my thoughts to have spoken to some other subject at this time, but casting about and considering with my self what might be of most and greatest concernment, the Lord was pleased to turn my thoughts again upon this Subject; for verily if it were the last Sermon that ever I should preach to you in this world (as the Lord knows whether it be or no) if so be that any of you were going out of the World, and I should be called to speak to you, I do not know what I should say, that is of more or greater concernment: If I were immediately to go out of the World, and were to preach my last Farewel Sermon, I know not what Truth to commend to you of more concernment than this, of the Righteousness which the Spirit doth convince the world of, in order to their Salvation.

Now that I may open it to you, if the Lord please, and the Lord open our hearts that we may understand it. I shall only speak to these three things.

1. To shew you in the general what we are to understand by *Righteousness.*

2. To shew you more particularly what this *Righteousness* is, which is the work of the Spirit to convince us of. And,

3. Shew you, How, or in what way usually the

the Spirit doth convince a Soul of *Righteousness*, or what work the Spirit doth in a Soul in order to the convincing it of *Righteousness*.

I shall bound my discourse in speaking to these three particulars if the Lord please.

1. Then, *What are we to understand by Righteousness in the general*; for that will make way for our understanding what this *Righteousness* is. In the general then, *Righteousness* is nothing else but a perfect exact conformity to the Law of God, or to the revealed Will of God; an exact conformity to it both in Heart and Life: That is *Righteousness* in the general. I say, a perfect conformity to the whole Will of God revealed, not only in the outward conversation, but in the inward frame of the Heart and Soul. You know when *Adam* was at first created, when he came immediately out of the hands of God, he was made perfectly righteous, *God made Man upright*, that is, *Righteous*: Well, wherein did that *Righteousness* of *Adam* consist? What was the *Righteousness* that *Adam* was created in? It is said, *He was made in the Image of God*. Now wherein did the Image of God in *Adam* lye? What, only in the conformity of his outward actions to the Law and Will of God? No alas! that was the least part of the Image of God in *Adam*: but *Adam* was made in the Image of God upright, and Righteous, and Holy in his inward man, especially in his Soul, he was made exactly conformable to the Will of God in every thing that he required of him, and therefore now when *Adam* did sin and fall, he lost the Image of God, he lost that *Righteousness* that was in his inward man, and you see,

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after his fall it is said, *That every imagination of the thought of mans heart were only evil, and that continually*, Gen. 6. 5. Not only every action that he did was evil, no, but the very thoughts of his heart, the inward frame of his heart and spirit was only evil, and that continually, therefore on the contrary, his Righteousness did consist in the conformity of his inward man to the Law and Will of God, 1 *John* 3. 7, 8. saith the Apostle, *He that doth righteousness is righteous; he that committeth sin is of the Devil, but he that doth righteousness is righteous.* Every sin is a transgression of the Law, so that now when a man or woman is exactly conformable to the whole Will of God, not only in his outward conversation, but also in his very thoughts and frame of his heart, then he is said to be perfectly righteous, this is perfect Righteousness. For, Brethren, a man may possibly be outwardly conformable to the Letter of the Law, and yet not be righteous in the account of the Holy Ghost; as the *Pharisees*, you know, were very righteous in respect of the Letter of the Law, Ay, but saith Christ, they are inwardly unrighteous, and therefore he tells them, *They were like whited Sepulchres which appeare beautiful outwardly, but inwardly are full of corruption and putrefaction*; therefore saith Christ, *Mat.* 5. 18. *Except your Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* They were very righteous and exact as to the Letter of the Law, and therefore saith *Paul*, when he was a Pharisee, *Touching the Righteousness of the Law, blameless.* The Pharisees were exact as to the Letter of the Law, but still

they did not look to their inside, to their heart, there they were unrighteous: so that by this you see what is meant by Righteousness in general, It is to be perfectly and exactly conformable to the whole Will and Law of God revealed both in heart and life. That in general.

2. But, *Let us in the second place enquire a little more particularly, What is this Righteousness here which Christ saith, the Spirit shall convince the World of?* What Righteousness doth Christ here mean? Brethren, *It cannot be meant of a man's own Righteousness that the Spirit doth convince of: for the Spirit doth rather convince men of their own Unrighteousness*; therefore it cannot be a mans own Righteousness. Therefore saith *Paul, I would not for all the world be found in mine own Righteousness*, Phil. 3. 9. Neither is it that Righteousness which is called the Righteousness of the Law, for that is still the same with a man's own Righteousness, which is when a man is obedient to the Letter of the Law, as the Apostle speaks in that third of *Philip.* 9. *And be found in him, not having on my own Righteousness, which is of the Law.* — Well, what Righteousness then is it which Christ here speaks of, when he saith, *The Spirit shall convince the World of Righteousness*; What Righteousness is it?

In brief, *It is that Righteousness which is called the Righteousness of God, in opposition to a mans own Righteousness.* The Righteousness of God, as the Apostle speakes, *Rom.* 10. 3. And so in other places; *The Jews being ignorant of the Righteousness of God, went about to establish their own Righteousness.* So that the one is set in opposition against the

the other: A mans own Righteousness and God's Righteousness is contrary, distinct, and in opposition to one another. The Righteousness of God is that Righteousness which God himself doth require in order to our salvation; and it is that righteousness which God will accept of, and no other righteousness for our salvation; and this Righteousness is also called, *The Righteousness of Faith*, *Rom.* 10. 16. So *Rom.* 9. 30. He calleth it, *The Righteousness which is of Faith*, because it comes in, in a way of faith and believing.

Question.

Now you will say, *Wherein lies the difference between the one Righteousness and the other? That we may understand things as we go along. Wherein lies the difference between that which is called our own Righteousness, and the Righteousness of the Law, and that which is called the Righteousness of God, and the Righteousness of Faith? What, doth the Difference lye here, namely, that our own Righteousness, or the Righteousness of the Law, must be exactly conformable and agreeable to the whole Will and Law of God to a Tittle, and the Righteousness of God not so?* No, Brethren, The Righteousness of Faith is an exact conformity to the Law of God to a tittle as well as the other. What saith the Apostle? *Do we make void the Law of Faith? God forbid*, saith he, *Rom.* 3. 31. No Brethren, the Righteousness which God doth require for our Salvation is a most exact compleat Righteousness to every tittle of the Law; One *Iota* or Tittle of the Law shall never perish; Heaven and Earth shall fail first. We cannot be saved by any Righteousness short of a most exact and compleat conformity to every tittle of

the Law, Well, *What Righteousness then is it?*

Answer.

I answer in a word, It is the Righteousness of Jesus Christ in our Nature. I say it is that Righteousness that Jesus Christ fulfilled in our humane Nature, he was made of a Woman, and made under the Law, and being made under the Law, he was in our Nature perfectly to fulfill the whole Law, every tittle of it, and so he did, and therefore you may observe, from his very conception to his death, he was perfectly conformable to the whole will of God; in his very conception, he was conceived and born without sin, saith the Angel to the Virgin *Mary*, *That holy thing that shall be born of thee*, — he was holy in his very Conception, *Conceived by the Holy Ghost*, and he was a Lamb without spot, we were all conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity, but Christ was without sin in his very conception, and that is much for the comfort of Believers, to think: Our nature is stained and polluted by sin, how shall we be accepted of God? why here is the humane nature of Christ without spot, and we shall be accepted for his sake, and Christ in the whole Course of his life was altogether without sin, he knew no sin, as 'tis expressed, 2 *Cor.* 5.21. *He knew no sin*, that is, no sin of his own, he had sin enough laid upon him, imputed to him, but he had no sin of his own, there was no guile found in his mouth, he did always those things that pleased the Father, *John* 28. 29. he never spake one idle word; no, but saith he, *Whatever I spake*

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I had it by Commmandment from my Father, he was blameless in his whole life, and therefore when he came to lay down his life, to resign up himself to his Father, he appeals to his Father, whether he had not done all the Work he had given him to do, *I have finished the Work* (saith he) *which thou gavest me to do, and now I come to thee.* Nay, Brethren, he was righteous and holy not only to his death, but also in his death, he was obedient and conformable to the will of God, therefore 'tis said, *Phil.* 2.8. *He became obedient to the very death*, Thus I say Christ was perfectly righteous. Now it is this Righteousness of Christ in our nature that the Spirit convinces the World of, that a soul must look to be accepted and saved only for the sake of this Righteousness of Christ. Well, Brethren, let me clear it to you by two or three Arguments, for truly these things may be matter of temptation to us sometimes, when we set upon believing in Christs Righteousness. The Soul may say, May I venture my soul upon the Righteousness of another? may I not possibly miscarry? am I sure that God will accept of me for the Righteousness of another — ? Well to give you two or three Arguments briefly upon Scripture Ground, to prove to you, that if ever we be accepted of God it must be through the Righteousness of Christ.

1. *The Holy Ghost doth plainly and expresly hold forth this to us in Scripture.* See a few Scriptures for it, *Isa.* 42. 21. *The Lord is well pleased for his Righteousness sake.* A very gracious and blessed word, *The Lord is well pleased for his own Righteousness sake*, not for that which is our own, for

you know Gods Righteouſneſs and our own Righteouſneſs are two diſtinct things, and contrary, but the Lord is well pleaſed for his own Righteouſneſs ſake, the Righteouſneſs of his own Son, and that is his own Righteouſneſs — the Lord is well pleaſed for that. *Iſa.* 45.24. Which is a Prophecy concerning Chriſt, *Surely ſhall one ſay, In the Lord have I Righteouſneſs and Strength, even to him ſhall men come, and all that are incenſed againſt him ſhall be aſhamed*; and then in the next verſe, *In the Lord ſhall all the Seed of Iſrael be juſtified, and ſhall glory.* In the Lord, and in him alone have I Righteouſneſs and Strength, in Chriſt have I Righteouſneſs, there is all my Righteouſneſs, ſhall the ſoul ſay. *Jer.* 23. 6. A Prophecy concerning Chriſt too, *Behold the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will raiſe up unto David a righteous Branch, and a King ſhall reign and proſper,* — This is plainly ſpoken concerning Chriſt: now mark what follows at *verſe 6. In his days Juda ſhall be ſaved, and Iſrael ſhall dwell ſafely, and this is his Name whereby he ſhall be called, The Lord our Righteouſneſs.* The very name that Chriſt ſhall be called by, is, *The Lord our Righteouſneſs.* I might give you Scriptures alſo out of the new Teſtament, take but one place, 1 *Cor.* 3. 30. *He is made of God unto us Wiſdom and Righteouſneſs.* — God himſelf hath appointed and ordained Jeſus Chriſt to be unto us Righteouſneſs, and therefore we may be confident of it, that it is through the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt that we muſt come to be accepted of God and ſaved, and not by our own Righteouſneſs.

2. Take this further Ground, and that is, becauſe, *The beſt Righteouſneſs of the beſt Saints that are*

are or ever have been in the World, all will fall short of Righteousness. Take the best Saint, and the best Righteousness of the best Saint, the best duties that ever the most holy Saint did perform, yet all will fall short of righteousness. Therefore the Church is not afraid nor ashamed to acknowledge, *Isa.* 64.6. *All our Righteousnesses* (for so it is in the plural number) *All our Righteousnesses are as filthy rags, loathsome and abominable, in the eyes of the Lord.* You see the best of Saints have a knowledge of their sinfulness. Saith *Paul*, *Rom.* 7. he speaks largely to it there, *verse* 23. *I see a Law in my members warring against the Law of my mind*, against the Law and Will of God, *and bringing me into Captivity to the Law of sin.* So *Eccles.* 7. 20. *There is not a righteous man upon the earth, that liveth and sinneth not.* And the Apostle *John* speaks a plain and bold word, 1 *John* 1. 8. 10. *If any man saith, he hath no sin, he is a liar, and the truth is not in him, and he deceiveth himself.* So then our own Righteousness will not do, that is imperfect and defective, therefore if ever we be saved by Righteousness, it must be by the Righteousness of another, which is a most perfect Righteousness; and what Righteousness can there be perfect, but the Righteousness of the Son of God in our nature? the Righteousness of an Angel would not serve our turn, it must be the Righteousness of one in our nature, and this must be the Righteousness of Christ, for there is no other can serve our turn, to make us accepted of God to eternal life; no other Righteousness doth fulfill the Law of God in our nature, but only the Righteousness of Jesus Christ, therefore, I say, it must needs be, that it is the

righteousnesse of Jesus Christ in our humane nature for which we must be accepted of God. And this is the righteousnesse which the Spirit of God is said to convince the World off.

Objection.

But you will say, If so be that every believer be made perfectly righteous by the righteousnesse of Jesus Christ, then how comes it to pass that believers cannot be Mediators for others, and make others righteous, for if so be, we have the very righteousnesse of Christ upon us, or we cannot be saved, then as the righteousnesse of Christ makes others righteous, why may not the righteousnesse of godly Parents make their Children to become righteous by their righteousnesse, it being the righteousnesse of Christ, why should it not be imputed to their very Children? What is the reason that believers being made righteous by the very righteousnesse of Christ, that they should not also by that righteousnesse, make others righteous.

Answer.

For Answer, plainly in a word, the reason is because, *Believers though they be made righteous by the very righteousnesse of Christ, yet notwithstanding they are not made righteous with that righteousnesse, in that manner that Christ was righteous, Christ was righteous inherently in his own person, but now the righteousnesse, that we are made righteous withall, it is ours only by imputation,* That, look now, as it was with Christ, Christ was made sin for us, saith the

the Apostle, that is, he had the sins of all believers imputed to him, he was made a sinner by Imputation. Now the reason why Christ did not make others sinners, by the sin that he had, as *Adam* made his posterity sinners, the reason is because Christ was not a sinner as *Adam* was, that is, not Inherently in himself, but by way of imputation. So now, we are righteous by Christs righteousnes only in a way of imputation, and therefore we cannot derive and communicate this righteousnes to another. I say, here is the reason of it, That though we be made righteous with the perfect righteousnes of Jesus Christ, yet we are not thereby made Mediators, and able to impute righteousnes unto others, to make them righteous with our righteousnes.

Objection.

But then there is another Objection for the clearing of this. You will say if so be that a believer be made righteous with the perfect righteousnes of Jesus Christ, then I pray, why should a believer be called upon to seek and follow after righteousnes? is not the righteousnes of Christ enough? is not that perfect enough? shall we add any thing to the righteousnes of Christ? that will make the righteousnes of Christ to be imperfect. Now if so be that you or I or any believer be made righteous with the very righteousnes of Christ, which is a most perfect and compleat righteousnes, then why should we need to seek after any further righteousnes? You know the Holy Ghost in Scripture calls upon Believers to follow after righteousnes, as the Apostle calleth upon *Timo-*

Timothy, 1 *Tim.* 6.11. *Follow after Righteouſneſs.* What? had not he righteouſneſs enough, if he had the righteouſneſs of Chriſt on him? what, ſhall a man or woman need any further righteouſneſs than the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt.

Anſwer.

For Anſwer, briefly, *It is true we ſhall not need any further righteouſneſs than the righteouſneſs of Chriſt for that end that Chaiſts righteouſneſs is for.* I pray mind it and underſtand it, I ſay, No believer doth need any further righteouſneſs, than the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, for that end Chriſts righteouſneſs is imputed to us; and what is that? namely, *To make us accepted of God, and to procure and obtain forgiveneſs of all our ſins, and eternal life, and ſalvation for us*; This is the end of Chriſts Righteouſneſs, and why it is imputed to us. Now 'tis true, we need not to follow after any other righteouſneſs for thoſe ends, for then we derogate from the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt.

Queſtion.

But why then you will ſay, are we called upon to follow after Righteouſneſs?

Anſwer.

Why, in ſhort, for I muſt not enlarge, we are to follow after righteouſneſs, to be exactly righteous in our lives, and dealings, and converſations, and to be obedient in duty, and diligent

gent in waiting upon God in his Ordinances; we are thus to follow after righteousness, not that we may be accepted of God for any thing that we can do in this world, not that we may be saved for any thing we can do or suffer here; we may do and suffer very much, and yet be damned for all that, but, *We are to follow after righteousness and holiness, partly by a way of thanksgiving unto God,* for his grace and goodness to us, *partly in a way of obedience to the Will of God, and also that we may maintain our peace that we have with God by walking closely, and uprightly with him.* He that walketh according to this rule, peace be upon him. Now by walking sinfully and unrighteously we lose the sence of our peace with God, but now by walking uprightly and closely with God, we come to maintain the sense of our peace; and I might further add, *By this means we come to enjoy more communion with God,* by waiting upon God in holy duties and ordinances, this is the means whereby God comes to meet with us, and manifest himself to us, but this is not to obtain salvation for us, or forgiveness of sins, no, that is the work and power of Christs righteousness alone; therefore I say, though a Believer be made righteous with the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, yet it is the duty of Believers to follow hard after righteousness. So now, you have heard the second thing opened, namely, what that righteousness in particuiar is which Christ speaks of, when he saith the Spirit shall convince the World of righteousness, that is, of this righteousness of God, this righteousness which is by faith, the righteousness of Jesus Christ in our nature, this

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is the righteouſneſs which the Spirit convinceth the World of in order to ſalvation.

3. But then you will ſay in the third place (to come to that) But how doth the Spirit convince of righteouſneſs in order to ſalvation? You have heard what Bighteouſneſs in general is, and what this righteouſneſs in particular is. *Now to ſhew you, that it is the work of the Spirit to convince of righteouſneſs.* Now what doth the Spirit do in order to the convincing a ſoul of this righteouſneſs in order to its ſalvation? Briefly this, I ſhall deſire to open to you in two or three particulars.

1. *The Spirit in convincing a Soul of righteouſneſs takes the Soul off from reſting upon or cloſing with his own righteouſneſs*, not from ſeeking and following after its own righteouſneſs, but from reſting and truſting, and leaning upon its own righteouſneſs; from looking to be accepted of God to ſalvation upon the account of its own righteouſneſs. This the Spirit of God doth take a ſoul from, in order to convincing it of righteouſneſs. Truly Brethren, this is the rock that we are all of us naturally prone to daſh upon, and to ſplit upon; we are all of us naturally prone to ſeek after acceptance with God upon the account of our own righteouſneſs, to run on in the way of the Covenant of Works, to ſeek for ſalvation in that way that *Adam* ſhould have been ſaved in if he had ſtood. *Doe*, and *Live*, be obedient to the Will of God, be exactly righteous, and you ſhall have life, this is the way that *Adam* ſhould have had life in, if he had continued in his obedience; but now this way of the Covenant of Works is null'd, and we cannot look for ſalvation in that way, but we are

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all of us naturally prone to run on in that way, to look for the life of our souls meerly by our own righteousnes; This was the stumbling stone that the *Jews* stumbled at, this was the great rock of offence, *Rom.* 9. 31,32,33. saith he, *The Gentiles which followed not after righteousnes, have attained righteousnes, but the Jews which followed after righteousnes, have not attained righteousnes*, why so? because the *Jews* stumbled at that stumbling stone, they sought after righteousnes by the works of the law, they sought to be righteous with their own righteousnes, and therefore mark what he saith, *Chap.* 10.3. *They being ignorant of Gods righteousnes, and going about to establish their own righteousnes, have not submitted themselves to the righteousnes of God.* This is natural to us to look to be accepted of God for our own righteousnes, and truly it is a very hard thing for a soul to be taken off from that, and therefore hence it is, that the people that are morally righteous, and not so notoriously wicked and prophane as others are, are ordinarily harder to be convinced and converted than others are, so that as Christ saith, *Mat.* 21. *Publicans and Harlots shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven before you*, speaking to the Scribes and Pharisees that were exact to the letter of the law. I say we are all apt naturally to stick there, & to run upon the rock of our own righteousnes, just as the Apostle speaks of himself when he was a Pharisee, *Philip.* 3. *I was* (saith he) *concerning the Righteousnes of the Law blameless*, but afterwards when the Spirit of the Lord had convinced him of his own unrighteousnes, and the righteousnes of Christ, at the 8 and 9 *Verses*, Now saith he, *I*

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would be found in him not having on my own righteousness which is of the Law, that righteousness that I had when I was a Pharisee; *I would not be found* (saith he) *having on my own righteousness, but that righteousness which is by faith in Christ Jesus.* Now I say we are very hardly brought off from our own righteousness, to close with this righteousness of Jesus Christ: but now it is the work of the Spirit in convincing a Soul of righteousness, to take the Soul off from its own righteousness, and therefore the Spirit is fain to take pains with the Soul, to shew it that all its own righteousness will come to nothing. And therefore do but observe the way and method of the Spirit of God, what the Spirit of God doth ordinarily when it taketh a Soul off from its own righteousness: The Spirit of God comes therefore and causeth the Soul to see, not only its own sinfulness by notorious open wickedness and prophaness that it hath lived in, it doth not only convince the Soul of its profaning of Sabbaths, and its disobedience to Parents, and lying and stealing, — and pilfering and dishonesty, —— when a Soul sees that then it cannot be accepted of God for its own righteousness. And not only so, but the Spirit of the Lord doth discover to the Soul the secret evils of his heart, inward sins that never saw the light of the Sun, that the World never knew of, The Spirit of the Lord comes and convinces of those wickednesses, that there is such and such wickedness in the heart, secret pride, and secret malice, and secret envy, and secret hypocrisy, and secret unbelief, and the like, and now how can the Soul expect to be saved of God for its own righteous-

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nes? What? is this the righteousnes (saith the Soul) that I look to be accepted for? And not only so, but the Spirit also doth discover to the Soul the unrighteousnes of its best duties and services, those things that men are apt to think that God should accept them for; now the Spirit comes and opens the understanding, and makes the Soul to see the imperfection and weakness of the best duties and services; as the Church saith, *All our very righteousnesses are as filthy rags*, and O! can I expect to be accepted for these prayers, and these duties and services that are so filthy, and so defective, and so impure! When the soul comes to be made sensible of these things, how can it expect to be accepted for its own righteousnes. Nay Brethren, the holy Spirit doth usually discover to a Soul not only the sinful failings that are in his best duties and services, but also the sinful frame of the heart and spirit, that there is a sinful frame of wickedness within, a law of rebellion and enmity against the will of God within, though possibly it hath never broken out, but there is a sinful frame of heart within, that every thought and imagination of the heart is only evil continually; and out of the heart proceeds all manner of abominations, evil thoughts, murder, and theft, and blasphemy, and all manner of wickedness. Now Brethren when the Spirit of the Lord comes and opens a mans heart to himself, that he sees the very frame and disposition of his heart is set against God, and the will of God in every thing, then the Soul must needs be convinced that it can never be accepted of God for its own righteousnes, the Soul sees that it hath no righteousnes

neſs at all in it ſelf to reſt upon. And not only ſo, but the Spirit of the Lord in this convincing a Soul of righteouſneſs, diſcovers to a Soul that this is not the way, where by it can look for acceptance with God by all that ever he can do, it is true indeed this was the way that *Adam* in his innocency ſhould have found life and ſalvation in, but ſince the Fall, that Covenant is broken and null'd, and now God hath no where promiſed to give life and ſalvation in the way of that Covenant, no God hath nulled that way of Salvation by our own works and doings, that if ſo be now it were poſſible a man or a woman to be perfectly obedient to the whole law, yet he may go to hell, and be damned for all that, becauſe now God is not bound nor engaged to beſtow eternal life and ſalvation upon man in that way, God is not bound to that Covenant, nor will ever ſave a Soul in the way of that Covenant. Now it is the work of the Spirit to diſcover this to a Soul, that this is not the way for me ever to attain ſalvation, it muſt be in another way and by another righteouſneſs, and hereby a ſoul is taken off from leaning and reſting upon its own righteouſneſs, and from ever looking for ſalvation by any thing it hath done or can do, though it ſhould do never ſo much; nay, and let me add this further, that when the Spirit of God doth thus take a ſoul off from leaning and reſting upon its own righteouſneſs, yet notwithſtanding the Spirit of the Lord doth put the Soul upon ſeeking and following hard after righteouſneſs and its own righteouſneſs too. Ay Brethren this is now a Goſpel-Myſtery that fleſh and blood can never attain to; for our carnal

carnal hearts are ready to argue thus, if we cannot be saved by our own righteousness, then we need not to follow after it, and so grow loose and carnal and careless and slighty, neglecting duties, or else being formal in them. But now the Spirit of God doth teach the Soul and lead it in this middle way, in this strait and narrow way; every soul that the Spirit of God doth convince of righteousness in order to salvation, he doth teach him, and instruct him in this, that though he shall never be saved by all that ever he can do, yet the Spirit leads him on in a way of holiness and righteousness, very exactly, to be careful to walk with God in obedience to the Lords will and command. And the Holy Ghost doth write a Law of obedience upon the heart, and therefore those that draw such conclusions from this doctrine of the Gospel, they do not understand the Gospel, nor this convincing work of the Spirit, which is to convince us that we are not to look for salvation by all our own righteousness, and yet convinces us of the necessity of following hard after righteousness. This now is the first thing that the Holy Ghost doth in convincing a soul of righteousness to take the soul off from resting and leaning upon its own righteousness.

2. But Secondly, Another thing that the Spirit doth in order to the convincing a soul of righteousness is this, namely, *The Spirit doth usually discover to the Soul what this righteousness of Christ is, by which it must look for acceptance with God to Salvation:* The Spirit doth usually reveal this righteousness to the soul, therefore saith the Apostle, *Rom.* 1. 17. *The righteousness of God is revealed*

vealed from faith to faith, It is the work of the Spirit of God to reveal this righteouſneſs, to open it, and cauſe the Soul to underſtand it, and therefore the Spirit is called the Spirit of Revelation, *Eph.* 1. 17. The Apoſtle prays there, *That God would give them the Spirit of Revelation, in the knowledge of Chriſt*; becauſe it is the work of the Spirit to reveal the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt to the Soul, and cauſe the ſoul to underſtand it in ſome meaſure, but ſtill the ſoul is ſenſible of its own ignorance and blindneſs, and poſſibly more afterwards than before. But in ſome meaſure there is a diſcovery made of this righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt to the ſoul, and in order to this there are ſeveral things that the holy Spirit doth diſcover to the Soul concerning this righteouſneſs of Chriſt, namely, It is the Spirit that diſcovers to the Soul the *Perfection of this Righteouſneſs*, that Chriſts righteouſneſs is a moſt perfect and compleat righteouſneſs, without any blemiſh, without any defect or imperfection. The Spirit ſhews to the Soul that Chriſt hath fulfilled all righteouſneſs; he was obedient to every tittle of the Law, there was no defect, no blemiſh at all in Chriſts life all along, neither in his outward nor inward man, from his very conception all along throughout his life to his very death; the Spirit of the Lord doth make a ſoul to underſtand this in ſome meaſure, it diſcovers the righteouſneſs of Chriſt to be a perfect and compleat righteouſneſs; that though my own righteouſneſs be full of defects and imperfections, yet the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt is a perfect righteouſneſs. That is one thing that the Spirit uſally doth in this convincing

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of righteousness, it discovers to the Soul that this righteousness of Christ is a perfect and compleat righteousness.

And not only so, but further, the Spirit discovers to the soul that it is not only a perfect but an all-sufficient righteousness; the righteousness of Jesus Christ is not only a perfect righteousness, exactly perfect to every tittle of the Law, but an all-sufficient righteousness; that the righteousness of Christ is able to save a World of sinners, he was able by his righteousness to be a propitiation for the sins of the whole World; 1 *John* 2.1,2. *He is the Propitiation not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole World*; that is, for the sins of all the Elect throughout the whole World, for all that were Christs seed, Christs posterity; that now as all *Adams* posterity were made sinners by the imputation of *Adam*'s unrighteousness, so now Christs righteousness is sufficient to make all his posterity, all his seed, to make them all righteous in the sight of God; because now this righteousness, it is the righteousness of the Son of God, of that person that is the eternal Son of God, of that person that is very God equal with the Father, the same Essence with God. Now this is the righteousness of God; as the Apostle calls the Blood that Christ shed, the Blood of God, *Acts* 20.28. So now this righteousness of Christ is the righteousness of God, as it is usually called in the New Testament, because it is the righteousness of that person which is God. Now this makes his righteousness to be an all-sufficient righteousness. Now then I may venture my Soul upon this righteousness, if it be an all-sufficient righteouness,

and the righteousness of God, then it is such a righteousness as is sufficient to save to the utmost all that come to God by him, and it is an everlasting righteousness, it will serve from the very beginning to the end of the World, to make poor unrighteous Creatures to become righteous in the sight of God, and to be accepted of God to eternal life and salvation; nay; and then further, the Spirit of God goes on to discover and reveal this, namely, that God is ready to accept of this righteousness in the behalf of poor sinners, here is now the mystery of the Gospel, for truly this is a hard thing for flesh and blood to be perswaded of, that I can be made righteous with the righteousness of another, that I can be fed with the meat that another eats, that I can be made warm by the cloaths that another wears, that I should be made righteous with the personal righteousness of Jesus Christ. Brethren, this is the work of the Spirit of God to discover and reveal this to the Soul, that God will accept of the righteousness of Christ on the behalf of poor sinners; *He was made sin for us that knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor. 5.21. Well, this, the Spirit of God doth discover and reveal to the Soul, when he comes to convince it of righteousness. Nay, and let me add further concerning this righteousness, namely, the Spirit doth discover to the Soul the way whereby he may come to have an interest in this righteousness, the Spirit doth discover that to the Soul, namely, that it is in a way of faith, and believing, and leaning, and resting upon the righteousness of Christ, that *Whosoever believeth on him shall not perish*

periſh but have everlaſting life, and *Chriſt is the end of the Law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth*, Rom. 10. 4. This is the work of the Spirit to diſcover this to the ſoul, when he comes to deal with the ſoul to convince it of righteouſneſs in order to ſalvation. This is the ſecond thing that the Spirit doth, firſt it takes us off from our own righteouſneſs, and then it reveals and diſcovers to the Soul this righteouſneſs of Chriſt, what it is, and which way it is to be attained. But then,

3. A third Work that the Spirit doth, which is the upſhot of all, and that is this, when the Spirit comes to convince a Soul of righteouſneſs in order to ſalvation, then, *The Spirit doth convince powerfully and effectually*, that is, *the Spirit comes powerfully, and perſwades the Soul to cloſe with this righteouſneſs.* This is to convince of righteouſneſs in order to ſalvation, ſo to convince as to perſwade and prevail with the ſoul to venture to cloſe with it; this is the way whereby a Soul comes to have an intereſt in Chriſts righteouſneſs, by faith and believing on Chriſt, and it is the work of the Spirit ſo to convince, ſo powerfully ſo as to prevail with the Soul to give the venture: Well, I will venture my Soul upon it, if I periſh I periſh, I will venture my Soul upon this righteouſneſs of Chriſt; the Spirit ſecretly perſwades the heart, ſo as now the Soul is made to ſay with the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 71. 16. *I will go in the ſtrength of the Lord God, I will make mention of thy rigbteouſneſs, even of thine only*; When the Spirit comes thus to convince effectually, ſo as to perſwade the Soul to venture to lean upon Chriſts righteouſneſs only to be accepted

of God to ſalvation, then the ſoul doth make mention of Chriſts righteouſneſs, and that only: well, I will venture to reſt upon that alone, and then ſurely ſhall one ſay, *In the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength*, then the ſoul ſhall be made to ſay, there's all my righteouſneſs, I have none of my own that I dare venture on, but I do now venture to lean the weight of my Soul upon this righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and if I periſh, I periſh. This is now the convincing work of the Spirit to convince of righteouſneſs. So now you have heard the point briefly opened, namely, *That it is the Work of the Spirit in order to Salvation to convince the Soul of righteouſneſs.* Now then briefly for the Application of it in a Word.

Application.

Here then we may come to underſtand whether or no the Spirit hath been at work upon our ſouls in order to ſalvation. It is a great Queſtion (I ſuppoſe you will think it ſo, when you come to ly upon your death-beds) whether or no the Spirit of God hath been at work upon my heart in order to my ſalvation? Well you ſee it is the work of the Spirit, in order to Salvation, to convince of ſin, and to convince of righteouſneſs; then conſider, I pray conſider ſeriouſly between the Lord and your own ſouls, and let us not willingly deceive our own ſouls, Hath the Spirit of the Lord ever been thus at work upon my heart? hath the Spirit ever come and convinced me of ſin, and of righteouſneſs? For if the Spirit of the Lord hath ever convinced you of ſin in order to your Salvation, it will go on alſo in the Work of

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Conviction to convince also of Righteousness. Therefore, I say, I pray consider of it seriously.

Objection.

You will say, Well, I hope the Spirit of the Lord hath been at work upon my heart, I hope I can say my heart hath been deeply troubled about my sin, and I have gone and confessed my sin unto God, and I have begged earnestly in prayer for the pardon of my sins.

Answer.

Well, a man or a woman may do all this, and yet come short of this convincing work of the Spirit which is in order to Salvation. Therefore consider further, I pray, for as you heard the last time, usually when the Spirit doth convince of sin in order to Salvation, it convinceth the soul especially of unbelief; and indeed till a Soul come to be convinced by the Spirit of the sin of unbelief, his conviction of sin may be no argument to him that the Spirit hath been at work upon his heart in order to salvation. Indeed when a soul comes to that discovery, that the soul is convinced of the evil of unbelief, then there is the greatest hopes that such a Soul is not like to miscarry; for I am perswaded, that the Spirit of the Lord never convinces a Soul of the evil of unbelief, but it is in order to his salvation; you shall never have a carnal heart to understand the evil of unbelief, that is the work of the Spirit of God. Now consider, I pray, hath the Lord discovered

to you, and convinced you of sin, especially of the sin of unbelief.

Objection.

You will say possibly, I hope the Spirit hath been at work upon my heart in order to salvation, for I know thus much, I am perswaded that without the righteousness of Christ I can never be saved, I can never be saved by mine own righteousness I know that, and I know that I must have the righteousness of Christ imputed to me by faith, or I cannot be saved.

Answer.

But Brethren, I pray consider of it, for here may be only a meer notional knowledge, a meer conviction in the notion only; you may be convinced that this is a truth, that there is no salvation but by Christ, A man or woman may be convinced of this notionally, he may have this knowledge in his head, that the only way whereby I must attain to salvation must be by the righteousness of Christ, by believing on Christ, but I pray consider whether the Spirit of the Lord hath throughly convinced you of the righteousness of Christ.

Question.

You will say, How shall I know that?

Answer.

Briefly by these two things.

1. When

1. When the Spirit of the Lord doth convince a Soul of righteousness in order to Salvation, it doth (as you heard) take a Soul clear off from its own righteousness, and not only so, but it leads the Soul to follow after Righteousness still, after our own righteousness too. This is the work of the Spirit, the Evangelical work of the Spirit to take a Soul off from its own righteousness and cause it to lean only upon Christs righteousness, and yet to follow hard after its own righteousness; it is a mystery to the World; ay, but the Spirit of the Lord doth lead a Soul in this way, whereas now one that hath but a notional conviction of the righteousness of Christ, and that his own righteousness cannot save him, alas! he will be ready to be formal and slighty in looking after his own righteousness, he will be formal and careless in duties and ordinances, — or else he will be ready to neglect them; he thinks under a notion of Christs righteousness, that he shall be saved by the righteousness of Christ, and so he neglects following hard after his own righteousness. Brethren, this is that the Spirit of the Lord doth, when he convinces a Soul of the righteousness of Christ in order to Salvation, it still causes the Soul to follow hard after its own righteousness, though not to be accepted of God for it, not to be saved by it, but for such ends as I told you of before. This is the way now that the Spirit of the Lord doth work upon the Soul in, in order to its salvation. And then

2. Again, this also the Spirit is wont to do, when he convinces of righteousness, he doth convince effectually and powerfully, (as I told you) he

he doth ſo convince the ſoul of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, as to perſwade the ſoul to venture to lean its everlaſting condition upon it, to lean there, to reſt there; I ſay, this is the work of the Spirit. And let us conſider with our ſelves, I pray, whether the Spirit hath been thus at work upon our hearts in order to ſalvation.

Well, to conclude and take my Farewel of you; As we deſire to obtain life and ſalvation through the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, take but only theſe three words which I ſhall leave with you and ſo have done. 'Tis a matter of everlaſting concernment, cloſing with this Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, fall ſhort of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt but a hairs breadth, and you fall ſhort of eternal life and ſalvation: for, *There is no Name under Heaven, whereby you can be ſaved, but by Chriſt*, and his Righteouſneſs; this is the new way of the Covenant of Grace, to be ſaved for righteouſneſs indeed, and a perfect Righteouſneſs too (as perfect as ever *Adams* was) but not for our own, but for the perfect righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt: therefore I ſay, let me commend but three Words to you, and ſo I have done.

Firſt, Study earneſtly and diligently to underſtand this Righteouſneſs of Chriſt; though poſſibly you may think you do underſtand it in ſome meaſure, yet there is a great deal more of it to be underſtood, it is a great Deep, a great Myſtery, therefore ſtill let us be much in the ſtudy of this Righteouſneſs of Chriſt.

Secondly, Beg and pray earneſtly for the Spirit to be given out unto you, to convince you of

of this Righteousness more and more, to convince you effectually and powerfully, so as to enable your souls to venture to lean upon it.

Thirdly, And then indeavour every day frequently to be exercising your selves in leaning and resting the weight of your Souls upon this Righteousness of Jesus Christ; do not only beg for the Spirit to convince us of this, but let us be indeavouring to exercise our selves frequently in leaning the weight of our Souls upon the Righteousness of Jesus Christ, to be accepted of God to eternal life.

I will repeat them again, and then have done.

First, Be very diligent in studying to understand what the Righteousness of Christ is: Our eternal life is in it; as *Moses* said, *Set your heart to this Word, for it is your Life.* So I say, this is your life, this Righteousness of Christ, therefore set your heart to study it, make it your work and business to study to understand still more and more of this Righteousness of Christ.

Secondly, Beg earnestly for the Spirit of Conviction, that Christ would send down his Spirit to convince us of this Righteousness, to convince us effectually and powerfully of it, so as to be enabled to rest upon it.

Thirdly, Let us be exercising our selves frequently in leaning, and resting the weight of our Souls upon this Righteousness, giving up our selves frequently, day by day, to lean and

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reſt the weight of our Souls upon the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt for acceptance with God to eternal life and ſalvation.

Well I have done, only this Word I ſhall add in a Word, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*

Thirſty

Thirſty Sinners invited to Chriſt.

SERMON VIII.

JOHN 7. 37.

In the laſt day, that great day of the Feaſt, Jeſus ſtood, and cried, ſaying; If any man thirſt, let him come unto me and drink.

YOU have heard before the Words that Chriſt ſpake when the Phariſees and Rulers ſent Officers to take him at the 30 *Verſe.* At the 33 and 34 *Verſes*, he told them that whatever their deſign ſhould be to take him, *Yet notwithſtanding* ſaith he, *yet a little while I am with you*, and whereas you are now deſirous to be rid of me, *Ere long I ſhall go away, and you ſhall ſee me no more*, and though you may deſire it, *You ſhall ſeek me*, ſaith Chriſt, *and ſhall not find me, and where I am, thither you cannot come*; Now mark what an effect theſe words had upon them, what uſe did the Jews make of that word of Admonition that Chriſt gave, and that gracious Counſel he gave; inſtead of making a good improvement, See *v.* 35. 36. they made uſe of his words to ſcoff

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at and mock him, ſay they, *Yet a little while and he will go away; will he go to the diſperſed among the Gentiles?* ſpeaking in deriſion and ſcorn, will he go among the diſperſed Gentiles? Chriſt ſpake plain enough, if they had not been maliciouſly blind, *Yet a little while* (ſaith he) *and I go to him that ſent me*, and ſo they made a meer mock. So that here we may take notice, that, *Malicious minded men inſtead of receiving any Word of Counſel, and advice, will be ready rather to rail, mock, and ſcoff at them who give it.* And ſo here to the Jews it was a word of Admonition that Chriſt gave, but they fell a mocking and ſcoffing at him; And ſo it was of old, 2 *Chron.* 14. 20. you read there, how King *Jehoſhaphat* ſent about Prieſts and Levites throughout the Cities, out of Compaſſion to their Souls, to teach the Word among them, and to put them in mind of their duty, and it is ſaid, they mocked thoſe that came, they mocked the meſſengers of the Lord, for the words which they brought were for the welfare of their Souls. And ſo you read concerning the Lords Prophets that he ſent to *Juda*, 2 *Chron.* 36. It's ſaid, *They mocked at the Lords Meſſengers till there was no remedy.* And ſo, *Acts* 17. *Paul* was preaching of the reſurrection of the dead, and 'tis ſaid they mocked, *Many mocked and ſcoffed at him*, v. 32. *And when they heard of the reſurrection of the dead, ſome mocked, and others ſaid, We will hear thee again concerning this matter.* And thus it hath been, and ſo I ſay, as *Paul* in the *Galatians*, *Even ſo it is now, and ſo it will be.* And it may be of ſupport unto the Servants of God that give words of Admonition, Reproof, and

and Reprehenſion, Let them be ſatisfied in this, that though they be mocked, 'tis no more than was the Lot of the Servants of God of old before them. Well, but mark now how Chriſt doth go on for all this, he was not diſcouraged, he doth not turn his back upon them, becauſe they mocked and ſcoffed and jeered him, but mark he goes into the Temple, and falls a preaching gracious Words unto them, as in the Text; *In the laſt day, that great day of the Feaſt, Jeſus ſtood and cried, ſaying, If any man thirſt, let him come unto me and drink.* Here was the Sermon that he preached after that deriſion that he met with from the Jews; I ſay, the words that I have read are the Sermon that Chriſt had preached in the Temple, as you may ſee recorded by the Evangeliſt. Concerning this Sermon take notice of two or three things.

1. *Firſt of all,* Here is ſet forth *the Time,* when it was that Chriſt preached this Sermon: It's ſaid, *the laſt Day, that great Day of the Feaſt,* what Feaſt? why the Feaſt of Tabernacles, that Chriſt did preach this Sermon, and 'tis ſaid the *laſt Day, and great Day of the Feaſt.* Obſerve it, the Feaſt of Tabernacles was not kept only one day, but many days, even ſeven days together. *Levit.* 23.34. *And the Lord ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, Speak unto the Children of Iſrael, the fifteenth day of the ſeventh Month ſhall be the Feaſt of Tabernacles for ſeven days unto the Lord,* the fifteenth day of the ſeventh Month, that is our *September.* Now for theſe ſeven days, the firſt and the laſt were kept in a ſolemn manner; in the other days they did ſervile work, but not on the

firſt

first and last day, and so in *Nehemia*'s time, they kept the last day of the Feast very solemnly, *Nehem.* 8. 18. *And they kept the Feast seven days, and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according unto the manner.* The last day, then the people came generally into the Temple to hear the law read unto them, and therefore that last day was called the great day of the Feast, for the people on the morrow were to depart into all parts of the Country, as they came from all parts; so here, on the last day, on the great day of the Feast, Christ preached unto them on this subject.

2. *Secondly*, 'Tis set forth by the *Manner of it*, in what manner Christ did preach this Sermon to them. There is a double circumstance in the preaching of this Sermon; It's said Christ stood, but ordinarily Christ is said to sit down; As he sat down in the ship, but here 'tis said he stood, that he might be better heard and seen of the multitude. And another thing about the manner of it, is, He stood and cried with a mighty voice, he did *extend his voice*, so as all might hear, there being a great concourse of people, and likewise intimating that he was not afraid of the people; he goes up into the Temple, and there he cries it, intimating also that the matter was a weighty matter, which he had then to speak unto them, as if he had said, now take this word with you, 'tis a matter of great concernment. And that is the third thing here in the Text.

3. *Thirdly*, The matter of his Sermon when he stood and cried so, what did he speak or say? why, this it was, *If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.* This was the sum of his Sermon

Sermon that he stood up and cried or preached unto the people. Wherein we have these two Particulars.

1. *A gracious Invitation to all that are athirst.* And

2. *A gracious Promise* that if they did come, they should drink. The Rabbies amongst the *Jews* recorded of this Feast, that in this last day, they were wont to go and powre abundance of water and wine (in a way of rejoycing) upon the Altar, and therefore Christ in allusion to that (speaking to them) saith, *If any man be athirst, let him come unto me, and drink.* Briefly to take up what I conceive to be Christs meaning in this place. There is a great deal of the Gospel here in these Words, in this general Proclamation, *If any man be athirst, let him come to me and drink.* Then know,

Doctrine.

That such as being athirst do come unto Christ, they shall certainly be supplyed unto the full, and that most freely.

Whoever being athirst doth come to Christ, he shall have a supply, he shall have a full supply, he shall not only tast or sip, but drink a full draught, his belly full, so filled, that as the Word saith, *Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water,* and not only so, but he shall have a full supply most freely, drink most freely he doth not desire money or price, but according to that Proclamation which you have to this purpose, *Isa.* 55. 1. *Ho every one*

that thirſteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea come, buy wine and milk without mony and without price. Come, and ye ſhall drink freely and that for nothing, without money, and without price. And ſo *Revel.* 22. 17. *And the Spirit, and the Bride ſay, Come, let him that heareth ſay Come, And let him that is a thirſt come, and whoſoever will, let him take of the water of life freely,* And the Spirit and the Bride ſay, Come, this is held forth freely, to drink freely, and it ſhall coſt nothing; As now a man that ſhould hold forth proclamation to all that would come to him and drink what they would, they might come, and ſhould drink freely without charge to them; So here, our Saviour Chriſt clearly holds forth Grace and Salvation freely, whoſoever comes they ſhall have it freely. Briefly to open the point, and ſhew,

1. *What manner of Thirſt it is that Chriſt ſpeaks off,* What thirſt is it?

2. *What is that ſame coming?* Or how may a man that is a thirſt, how may ſuch an one come? you will ſay, ſuppoſe it be a thirſt after the water of life, how may I come, or in what way may I come to Chriſt? And then

3. Shew you, *That thoſe who being thirſty do come to Chriſt, they ſhall certainly be ſupplyed to the full,* They ſhall have drink given them freely, moſt freely. I ſhall deſire to have reſpect to the ſeaſon and apply my ſelf accordingly to ſhew you what we are to underſtand by this ſame thirſt, *If any man be a thirſt let him come and drink,* What manner of thirſt is it?

1. *We are not here to underſtand it to be a bodily thirſt,*

thirst, but we are to understand it of spiritual thirst, a thirsting of the Soul, as *David* saith, *My Soul thirsteth for thee O God, for the Living God*, Psal. 42.2. There's a thirst of the Soul, as well as a thirst of the Body, and the thirst of the Soul is set forth by the similitude or resemblance of the Body, and so by what this thirst of the body is, we may the better understand the resemblance of the thirst of the Soul. There are three things in a bodily thirst.

1. There is a sense that the body feels of want, there is not only a want of moisture but the body is sensible of it, it is such a want as is an afflictive want, in the want of it the body stands in need of a supply, and so you may read concerning *Hagar*, the water being out, she did not know what to do for water, and away she goes crying for her child, and her child cries too, and so even ready to perish for want of water. And so *Sampson*, after he had made a great slaughter of the *Philistims*, saith he, *What shall this victory do me good, if I want water*? so that it is the sense of the want of something that is needful, and as there is a sense of something, so an ardent and vehement desire, and longing after the fulfilling of that desire, as you read of *Sisera*, *Judg.* 4. That great General beggd a draught of water being very thirsty.

2. In the thirst of the body, there are not only longing desires, vehement earnest desires for a supply, but it is altogether unsatisfied, till it hath some thing of water or moisture to supply it's thirst. As the *Israelites*, they must have water whatever comes of it, they must have water, and *Moses* smites the rock, and fetcht water out of it for them. Why

1. *Firſt of all*, In the thirſt of the ſoul, the ſoul is ſenſible of the want of ſome ſpiritual good thing, he is not only wanting it, and without it, but he is ſenſible of it: In this thirſt of the ſoul, there is a deep ſenſe of the want of ſome ſpiritual good thing, *Pſal.* 63.1.2.3. *David* being baniſhed from the Tabernacle, from the publick worſhip, O! ſaith he, *My Soul thirſteth for God*; He wanted the Ordinances, as he uſed to have had them, *that I may ſee thy glory in thy Sanctuary.* In *Iſa.* 41. 17. *When the poor and needy ſeek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirſt* (a gracious promiſe) ſee what want there is, when the Soul is in ſuch a caſe, being ſo ſenſible that it is even faint and failing, *I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Iſrael will not forſake them.* And then again,

3. As with the body when it's athirſt, it doth vehemently and ſtrongly deſire; ſo now in this ſame thirſt of the ſoul there is an ardent, an earneſt and ſtrong deſire after that which it finds it ſtands in need of, *Pſal.* 42.1.2. *David* doth expreſs the thirſt of his ſoul, as the Hart that is wearied, and tyred, and juſt ſpent in hunting: O it longs and thirſts after the water brooks for its refreſhment, *ſo doth my Soul after thee O God, O when ſhall I come and appear before God!* So *Pſal.* 63. 8. *My Soul followeth hard after God*, it was when his ſoul was thirſty; in the beginning of the Pſalm his ſoul was thirſty for God, and *v.* 8. *My Soul followeth hard after God*, more than a man that is athirſt follows hard for the ſatisfying his deſire of thirſt. So when the Soul that hath wanted ſome ſpiritual good thing (being athirſt)

hath

hath longed vehemently, and ſtrongly, and been very earneſt for it. And then again

3. When the ſoul is ſpiritually thirſty, it is not ſatisfied with any thing ſhort of that which it finds it ſtands in need of, of that ſpiritual good thing, of that ſpiritual mercy; As *Abraham*, he was athirſt, his ſoul was athirſt for the accompliſhment of the Promiſe; well, *Abraham* goes a long while before the accompliſhment of the promiſe, twenty years or better, and in the mean while God gives *Abraham* other Promiſes, but yet he is not ſatisfied; ſaith God to *Abraham*, *Behold Abraham, I am thy ſhield, and thine exceeding great reward*; what could *Abraham* deſire more than God to be his great reward, even all; and yet ſaith *Abraham*, *Lord what wilt thou give me? and I go childleſs*; nothing elſe but what God promiſed him will ſatisfy him. When the ſoul is athirſt, nothing will ſatisfy but what it is a thirſting after. One thing have I deſired, and that will I ſeek, it is that which I have thirſted after, and longed for, and nothing ſhall ſatisfy me till I have my longing; I have made it the main of my deſires, and I will ſtill deſire it, even as the Woman of *Canaan*; ſhe deſired mercy for her Daughter that was poſſeſſed of a Devil, ſhe had other mercies, yet ſhe would not be ſatisfied without ſhe had that mercy. And this is the nature of a thirſt; Why now ſaith Chriſt, *If any be a thirſt, let him come to me.*

Objection.

But you ſhall ſay, What is the Object of this

thirst that he thirsts after, or for? what is it? for the thirst of the body, water, or some moisture for the body? But now what is the Object of this thirst? must Christ supply a man with whatsoever he thirsts for? suppose he thirsts for a great deal of the world, or suppose he thirsts for health, and strength, or the life of a friend or relation, or suppose it may be for some spiritual mercy, the performance of spiritual duties, and the like, whatsoever a man thirsts for, must it be given him?

Answer.

It is true indeed, it's not here expresst for whatsoever a man doth thirst, I suppose Christ doth not mean whosoever thirsts for the World, or worldly Comforts, or for spiritual gifts, *&c.* for carnal ends, but Christ means such mercies and blessings as do accompany and necessarily tend to the salvation of the soul; if any man thirst for such a mercy, for that which he calls in the next verse, *the Water of Life*, *Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water*, who thirsts so; and he doth more plainly express it, *Verse* 39. This he spake of the Spirit, *Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living Water*, that is, whosoever is athirst for spiritual mercies, whosoever is athirst for saving sanctifying grace, he that is athirst for the Comforts of the Spirit, for the saving graces thereof, as faith, meekness, humility, and patience, as the Apostle reckons divers fruits of the Spirit, *Galat.* 5. 22,23. Whosoever doth long, and is sensible of the want of these saving blessings, and mercies, pardon of sin, and assurance, *&c.*

whoso-

whosoever is sensible of these wants, and longs for a supply of them, and is unsatisfied without them; Whosoever he is that is thus, *Let him come to me.* Now, I say, this same spiritual thirst of the Soul is very necessary, else the Soul will hardly ever come to Christ for to be supplyed: Like as it is with a man that hath no ailment at all, at least no sence of it, tell him of a Physician, he will not stir a step after him for cure: Those that are truly thirsty, and have not wherewithal to supply themselves, they are they that will come to Christ. And hence it is that when Christ would stir up those of *Laodicea* to come unto him, he doth it by shewing them their spiritual wants; *Thou saist*, saith he, *that thou standest in need of nothing, that thou art full and standest in need of nothing; But I say*, saith Christ, *that thou art blind, miserable and naked.* First Christ doth convince them (as it were) of their need of a thirst, and then holds forth the Water of Life. Here's the first thing opened. What we are to understand by this thirst. They who are truly thirsty, let them come to Christ: But,

2. What is this coming to Christ, or how may the Soul come unto Christ, to drink of the water of life? As I said before concerning thirst, 'tis not a thirst of the body, but a thirst of the soul: In what way may the Soul be said to come unto Christ? Briefly three ways the Soul that is athirst may be said to come to Christ.

1. First, *We are to come to Christ in the way of his Ordinances*, attending upon his Word, to hearken to Christ there; Let him come to me in the way of mine Ordinances; As in Scripture

phrase, in that place before mentioned, *Isa.* 55. 2, 3. Coming is an hearkening diligently, enclining the ear; Come unto me by enclining of your ear; Jesus Christ is usually to be found in his own way in his ordinances, *Mat.* 28. 20. *Lo I am with you alway, even to the end of the World*, yea in his Ordinances, in the administration of the Gospel, I am with you. Then come to the place where Christ is, or where he may meet with you. *Received you the Spirit by the hearing of the Law, or by the preaching of Faith?* that is the Gospel; *Ye received the Spirit*, saith the Apostle *Paul, by having the Gospel preached*; he compares the preaching of the Law, and the preaching of the Gospel, and calls the preaching of the Law the Letter, and the preaching of the Gospel the Spirit. To come to Christ, to wait upon Christ in his own way, where he gives out this water of life; he that receives of this water of life, must be found in the way where Christ comes, as *Zaccheus* was, when Christ said to him, *this day is Salvation come to thy house*. This was beyond his desire, and beyond his thirst: Would you come to Christ, come into his Galleries, come into my sister, my Spouse. Would you come to Christ? come where he is, and see, he walks in the midst of his golden Candlesticks, there wait upon him in the way of his Ordinances, and here what he will say unto you for a supply of your wants.

2. Secondly, *Come unto Christ in a way of Asking*, by asking of him the waters of life, So we are to come, and this is called a coming to the Lord in the *Hebrews*, *He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that*

that diligently seek him, Chap. 11.6. He that comes to God, how? in a way of prayer, and so to seek grace to help in a time of need; come in a way of prayer. And see how he directed the Woman of *Samaria*, Christ asked her a little water, and she denyed him, well saith Christ, *If thou hadst asked of me, I would have given thee living water*, how would he have given her living water? why in a way of asking.

3. Thirdly, *We are to come in a way of Faith*, And so saith Christ here in this Text, *If any man thirst, let him come and drink*, that is, he that believeth in me, and so this coming to Christ is expounded to be believing, *John* 6.35. *He that cometh unto me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst.* Look now as unbelieving is a departing from the Lord, *Heb.* 10. 38.39. *Take heed, if any man draw back, my Soul shall have no pleasure in him; But we are not of those that draw back, but of them that believe to the saving of the Soul.* O! an evil heart of unbelief is a departing from God; and so then by believing, the soul is said to come to God, to draw neer to God. But what is that coming unto Christ, or believing in Christ, whereby the Soul shall be fully satisfied? is it a believing that Jesus Christ is the Messias, the Saviour of the World? the very Devils do believe this; No, but briefly, This believing is, namely, *The Souls rest, and relying, and trusting upon Christ for acceptance in the sight of God, for remission of sins, for Salvation, and eternal life.* Trusting and relying upon Christ and his merits for Salvation, a putting confidence in the Lord. Now when the Soul doth rely and venture

venture through a Word of invitation in the Goſpel, through Chriſts invitation doth adventure to rely upon his merits, to be wholly accepted in the ſight of God. This now is a coming to Chriſt. And now ſaith Chriſt, *If any man thirſt, Let him come unto me and he ſhall drink.* Let not any here move contention, and ſay, what do you bid us come to Chriſt, why this holds forth free Will? Why, know that ſuch exhortations uſually and frequently are in all the duties, that the Holy Ghoſt requires of us, which he knows we have no ſtrength to do; the Lord calls us to pray, and 'tis our duty ſo to do; and to believe, but we have no ſtrength and power of our ſelves, but we muſt not ſtand upon cavelling and ſay, 'tis but a folly for us to be ſtriving, ſeeing we can do nothing, but it is our duty to be doing what lies in us to the performance, and wait upon the Lord for his coming in with power to enable us to perform; as *Lazarus*, when he was in the grave, Chriſt called and with his word power was given forth, and he came out. So now we ſhould indeavour to rely and truſt upon Chriſt in his grace, and in his promiſe to have a ſupply of this ſame Water of life, and not to give over and cavil. That is a third, to ſhew what way the Soul that is truly a thirſt ſhould come to Chriſt. Then

3. Thirdly, *Such as being athirſt and do come to Chriſt, they ſhall certainly be ſupplyed.* They ſhall certainly have a full ſupply, and it freely given them, for ſo ſaith Chriſt, *If any man thirſt let him come, and he ſhall drink freely*; He doth not expect any thing, or hold forth any price, but they, whoever come, ſhall drink freely, they ſhall

ſhall certainly have a full ſupply, and be ſupplyed freely; and he ſpeaking it, ſpake in the hearing and audience of many thouſands. I ſhall ſpeak a Word of Application.

Application.

This may help us to diſcern, whether we have ever been made to drink out of the Well of Salvation, Whether ever we have been made to drink of the waters which Jeſus Chriſt hath given forth: and to go no further than the Text, there are two things that may help us to diſcern it, and one is this.

1. That if ever the Soul hath drank of the waters of life that are held forth, then it was once athirſt for Chriſt; for here the offer that Chriſt makes is to thirſty ſouls, and thoſe who thirſt not will not care for coming. And

2. Not only thirſty, but they muſt alſo come to Chriſt. And therefore briefly to hint what I have ſpoken before.

1. *Conſider whether you have been truly thirſty,* and by that you may ſee and know whether you have truly drank of this water of life. Conſider it every one, hath my ſoul been truly thirſty? the ſoul that is truly thirſty is really ſenſible of ſome ſpiritual want, that he wants ſome ſpiritual mercy, ſo ſenſible as to be ſpiritually affected, yea afflicted with the ſenſe of it: As a man that is thirſty for water, he is ſo ſenſible that if he have it not he is afflicted for it; why ſo, let every ſoul conſider, well, hath my ſoul ever been really ſenſible of the want of ſome ſaving mercy, or truth?

truth? hath my ſoul been ever ſenſible of it? I pray conſider it with your own ſouls, what ſaving grace is it that your ſouls have been ſenſible for the want of? even afflicted for the want of it? if ever you have been very greatly thirſty in your bodies, you have been very ſenſible. I pray conſider, can you remember that ever your ſouls were really ſenſible ſo as to be afflicted for the want of ſome ſpiritual ſaving mercy from God?

2. Again, *Conſider, If you have been thirſty, Whether you have ever found that ſame ſtrong ardent, and longing deſire after a ſupply of that ſpiritual want you are in?* As pardon of ſin, or ſaving grace: Have your ſouls not only been affected, but afflicted from the ſence of the want of Grace, being ardently, vehemently, and earneſtly longing after it: Can you remember at ſuch a time yonr body was thirſty, and you longed for water, and could have drank puddle water by a good token, and cannot you remember that your ſouls have been longing, vehemently longing, moſt earneſtly longing after, and panting after this ſpiritual water of life, and to have been altogether unſatisfied, without you might have that ſpiritual grace and mercy, which you have longed for: If a man be thirſty, he will not be ſatisfied with a ſong, you may ſing him a ſong, but that will not ſatisfy him, and give him what you will he muſt have that which he longs for, and that which he deſires, or nothing. And hath it been thus with your ſouls? conſider what I ſay; can you ſay, you have longed for this grace and the other, for ſaving grace and the like, well, but have you not been ſatisfied with ſomething elſe?

for

for I say, if we had not had in some measure a supply, our souls would still have been thirsty, and never satisfied without that we have found a need of. And then take that along with all, *viz.*

3. *Consider whether ever you have truly come to Christ.* Suppose you have longed for this and that mercy, and have been unsatisfied for want of this mercy, consider of it, did you ever truly come to Christ? have you ever been athirst? have you ever come to Christ in his Ordinances for a supply? why, yes you will say, you have come to the Ordinances to hear the Word preached; Ay Brethren, you may come to hear, and yet not come to Christ; have you ever come to hear the Word from the sense of the want of some spiritual saving grace, that he would supply to you? it is ordinary for every one to come, except they are such as are desperately wicked and prophane, but thus we are to come, and have we ever come thus to Christ? even as the Saints have been wont to come to the Ordinances, with a sense of their spiritual wants, *I will hearken and hear what God the Lord will speak to me, for he will speak peace*: He wanted peace, and he had the sense of the want of peace upon him, now saith he, God will speak peace. So *Psal. 73.* The good man was under a great temptation, and it was even too hard for him, and he was even ready to cry out of the temptation, and murmur, and repine against God, well he now goes unto the Lord in the way of his Ordinances, and hearkens what God will give unto him, to answer his temptation, and then his temptation was answered

in

in his waiting upon God in the ſenſe of his ſpiritual wants for a ſupply. And ſo have you even come thus to the Lord in the way of his Ordinances? when you came this day before the Lord, can you ſay (between the Lord and your own Souls) that you came upon the ſenſe of ſome ſpiritual want for your Souls unto the Lord in this Ordinance? Why Brethren, it is a rare thing for to come to Chriſt in the way of his Ordinances, in the ſenſe of the want of ſome ſpiritual mercy. But,

4: Again, Conſider, *Have you ever come to Chriſt in a way of prayer*? to ask a ſpiritual mercy and bleſſing. It's true indeed, you will ſay, you go to God every day for the pardon of ſin, and aſſurance of it; you go every day, but now have you come to the Lord and asked this ſpiritual mercy, and the other, as a thirſty man that is even ready to periſh for want of drink, and to take nothing in a way of ſatisfaction (whatſoever you have beſides) without you have that you are ſo ſenſible of.

5. And then, Conſider, *Whether you have ever come to Chriſt in a way of Faith.* There is the coming to Chriſt indeed, if ever you would drink of the water of life, you muſt come in a way of faith. Though you have come to the Word, and come in a way of prayer, yet have you come in a way of faith? relying, and reſting, and rolling upon Chriſt in a way of Faith, to be accepted of the Father through him, and ſo for remiſſion of ſins, and whatever ſaving benefit you ſtand in need of. Have you ever came to Chriſt thus? relying upon him in his word, in the invitation he makes there,

and

and in his promise? this is the way to come to Christ; *He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.* Let us consider of it between the Lord and our own souls, whether ever we have come to Christ and so drank of the waters of life? if we have not been thirsty, though we may have seemed to be so, yet if we have not really come to Christ, we fall short of what we might have expected to have met with.

I thought to have prest the invitation on poor souls, that they might come and drink of the water of life, but the time is past.

Thirsty

Thirſty Sinners invited to Chriſt.

SERMON IX.

JOHN 7. 37.

In the laſt day, that great day of the Feaſt, Jeſus ſtood, and cried, ſaying; If any man thirſt, let him come unto me and drink.

THE Point or Truth that was before us from theſe words was this; namely,

That ſuch as being thirſty, and come unto Jeſus Chriſt, ſhall certainly have a full and free ſupply.

Or, as you may take it in the words of Chriſt, *If any man be a thirſt, let him come to* Jeſus Chriſt *and drink.* This Jeſus Chriſt did ſpeak, and cryed it in the hearing of many thouſands, ſaying, *If any man thirſt, let him come unto me and drink.*

You have heard what it is to thirſt, and what this thirſt is, it is a thirſt of the ſoul which Jeſus Chriſt here ſpeaks of, *If any man thirſt*, it implyes theſe three things.

1, There is a ſence, even an afflictive ſence of ſome-

something that it sees a necessity of: As it is with the thirst of the Body, if one be truly thirsty he doth not only want water, or want drink or moisture, but is sensible of it, and is afflicted with the sense of it. So now, this same thirsty soul it hath a sence of spiritual want, and is afflicted with the sense of it. You may see *David* cryes out saying, *I am in a place where no water is.* And, *Psal. 63. My soul thirsteth for God.* And the Prophet *Isaiah* saith, *The needy seek water, and their tongue fails for thirst.* There is an afflictive sense upon the soul from the want of some spiritual good.

2. There is not only a sense of want, but there is also an ardent and vehement desire of a supply. And,

3. The Soul is not only longing and desiring, but is unsatisfied with any thing short of that it desires.

Several other particulars were insisted upon, and I came to a third, which now I shall desire to speak to through the Lords assistance. *Viz.*

That such as do come to Christ shall have a full supply.

Every soul that doth come to Christ shall be filled; He that comes to me, shall not only have a taste, but shall have a full supply; *Let him come unto me and drink*; He shall not only have a full suyply but a free supply; Christ doth not require any thing at all, Whosoever he be that comes unto me, he shall drink, he shall be freely supplyed. *Rev. 22. 17. Let him that is a thirst, come: And whosoever will, let him come, and take of the waters*

of Life freely. And *Iſa.* 55. 1. *Ho every one that is a thirſt come ye, to the Waters*: He ſhall be made to drink, and be ſupplied with all ſpiritual, heavenly, and eternall Bleſſings. Jeſus Chriſt he is a full ſupply, and though we may have a Notion that in Jeſus Chriſt there is a full ſupply, yet we have a Principle and Notion in us, that we have ſome ſupply in our ſelves; A Popiſh Principle, Chriſt may ſupply us in part, but ſome from our ſelves; and therefore we have a Notion, as if we ſhould go unto Chriſt with money in our hands, to buy it of him. Therefore a little to clear theſe things, *viz.* To demonſtrate,

1. That Jeſus Chriſt will certainly give a full ſupply.

2. That there is a full ſupply that Chriſt will give out, not a part only, but a full ſupply to all that come to him.

Firſt, That Jeſus Chriſt will give out a full ſupply of all ſpiritual Bleſſings: Whatſoever good things the ſoul can ſtand in need of, or can poſſibly deſire; Jeſus Chriſt will give out a full ſupply unto all them, even every of them that comes to him.

1. The firſt Demonſtration is taken from *The Incomprehenſible Fullneſs that is in Jeſus Chriſt.* He is a full Fountain, not as a Pail or a Bucket drawn from a Well, but he is a full Fountain; now from out of a fountain there is a full ſupply to be had, a man may drink as much as ever he will, as much as ever he can hold; Now Chriſt is a full Fountain, ſee what is ſaid concerning Chriſt, *Zech.* 13. 1. *In that day, there ſhall be a Fountain ſet open to the houſe of David, and to the Inhabitants*

of

of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. And so, *Coloss.* 1. *It pleased the Father, that in him all fulness should dwell, even all fulness*: Now if Christ be a fountain, a full fountain, there is fulness of supply to be had in him: Now all fulness of blessings are in Jesus Christ, he is a fountain of all spiritual things that are needful for the salvation of a poor soul, and there is a fulness of Spirit in Christ, *John* 3.34. *For God giveth not the Spirit by measure to him*, And so *Coloss.* 2. 9. 'tis said, *It pleased the Father that the fulness of the God-head dwelt in him as Mediator*, the fulness of the Deity, the fulness of the Spirit.

2. And then, as there is a fulness of the God-head dwelling in him as Mediator, and a fulness of the Spirit, so there is also a *Fulness of all gifts, and of all graces in Jesus Christ*, John 1. 14. *He is the only begotten Son of the Father full of Grace and Truth.* And so in him are hid the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, they are all hid in Christ, he is the fountain of them; and the Apostle hath another full expression *Ephes.* 3. 8. *Unto me who am less than the least of all Saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ*: Unsearchable riches that can never be drawn dry. The fulness of the Spirit, the fulness of all Grace dwelleth in him.

3. Thirdly, There is a *Fulness of Righteousness and Satisfaction in Jesus Christ*, so as to make a poor sinner to be accepted as righteous before God, and discharge it of all sins, as the Angel told *Daniel*, Chap. 9.24. *To make an end of Sins, and to bring in an everlasting Righteousness*, a righ-

teouſneſs that will ſerve to all eternity for all, from the beginning to the end of the World; and though the Saints are ſtriving after a meaſure and fulneſs daily, yet notwithſtanding there is a fulneſs in Jeſus Chriſt, the blood of Jeſus cleanſeth from all ſin, there is merit enough, and vertue enough. 1 *John.* 2.5. *If any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation for our ſins, and not for ours only, but for the ſins of the whole World.* There's righteouſneſs, and ſatisfaction, and merit enough for all. And

4, Then there is a *Fulneſs of power to give out, and to communicate unto others.* See *John* 5.26,27. *For as the Father hath Life in himſelf, ſo hath he given to the Son to have Life in himſelf, and hath given him authority to execute Judgment alſo, becauſe he is the Son of man.* As the Father hath life in himſelf, ſo there is fulneſs of power and authority given out unto Jeſus Chriſt, to give out to whom he will, and he gives and communicates as being full of the Spirit.

1. *He communicates of the Spirit and Holy Ghoſt to whom he will,* He gives the Spirit, and therefore promiſes it to his Diſciples, *John* 16.7. When they heard of his departure from them, that night he ſhould be betrayed, Chriſt having given them a hint of it, they were troubled, and ſaith Chriſt, *Becauſe I tell you the truth you are grieved, yet nevertheleſs it is expedient for you that I go away,* and that you be deprived of my preſence, *for when I go away, I will ſend the Holy Ghoſt, the Comforter unto you.* And ſo the Apoſtle *Peter Acts* 2. When the Holy Ghoſt fell upon

on the twelve with fiery tongues, the people marvelled at it, and thought they were drunk with new wine, no saith *Peter*, *These are not drunken with new wine*, as you suppose, *this is an effect of the Promise as to the latter days, according to Joels Prophecy.* And

2. Again, *He communicates of the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit.* The Graces of the Spirit are given out by Jesus Christ, *Eph.* 4.8. *When he ascended on high, he led Captivity Captive, and gave Gifts unto men*, And so the Apostle saith, *Grace and Peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.* He giveth Gifts and Graces.

3. And so again, *Christ doth communicate and give out Forgiveness and Remission of Sin.* He hath power and authority to give out that, as *Mat.* 9. When they brought the Palsey man, and Christ saw their faith, saith he, *Son be of good chear, thy sins are forgiven thee*, and certain of them thought he had blasphemed, well saith he, *That I may shew unto you, that I have power on earth to forgive sins, I say unto thee, Son, take up thy bed and walk.* And so, *Acts* 5.31. *Him hath God exalted with his own right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give unto Israel repentance and forgiveness of sins.* And

4. Again, *Jesus Christ doth communicate Peace and Consolation*, Peace with God, and true Comfort. *Being justified by Faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.* And so in another place, *If there be any consolation in Christ Jesus*, — taking it for granted there is consolation in Jesus Christ, and all true consolation comes

from him. And ſo as our ſufferings abound, ſo do our conſolations abound much more through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. Again

5. *It is Jeſus Chriſt alſo that doth communicate and give out eternal life*, to whom he will: Saith he, *My ſheep hear my voice and they follow me, and I give them eternal life.* Brethren, Chriſt hath power and authority to give out all ſpiritual bleſſings, a fountain having all fulneſs, ſo they that come to Chriſt for a ſupply come to a full fountain. Brethren, if ſo be that Jeſus Chriſt were full of the Spirit, and full of grace, — yet if he were not full as a fountain, he could not communicate; look now, as it is with a bucket, though it may be full of water, yet notwithſtanding it hath not the fulneſs of a fountain, as it doth ſupply any it hath ſo much the leſs, but Chriſt now being a fountain-fulneſs, though he communicate never ſo much, yet ſtill there is the ſame fulneſs, as now go to the ſea, all the rivers in the World are filled with the ſea, and yet the ſea hath never a whit the leſs; and ſo the Sun hath given out its light day by day, four thouſand years together, and yet the Sun hath never the leſs light in it, becauſe it is the fountain of light; So Chriſt, (now) being a fountain hath never the leſs in communicating, ſtill as much grace, as much holineſs, as much righteouſneſs as before. And ſo the Saints ſome of them have been full of the Holy Ghoſt (as *Stephen*) though yet notwithſtanding, their fulneſs is not the fulneſs of a fountain, and ſo they cannot ſupply the want of others; As the wiſe Virgins, when the fooliſh Virgins wanted Oyl and their lamps were out, they would have had

had oyl of the wise, but say they, we have none to spare, none to communicate, why? because they have not a fountain. But still now in Jesus Christ there is a fulness, as a fountain of all grace whatsoever. That is the first Demonstration.

2. *Secondly*, Take another withall, and that is this, to shew that there is a full supply in him, because, *All that come to Jesus Christ are neer to him, nay they are united to him*, They are made neer unto God, being united unto Christ, and thereupon they have a communication of his fulness from Union, for Union is the cause of communication; as now if the Branches of a Tree be united to the tree, they communicate and partake of the trees root, sap, and nature of it; Saith Christ, *I am the Vine, ye are the Branches*, why now the branches of the Vine partake of the Vine; look now as it is with the members of the natural body, being joyned, they do communicate and participate with all the members; as the Head, it is the seat of all the sensitive or animal Spirits, and the head being united to the body, there is a communication of all the senses, from the head to every member according to its capacity, why now, Jesus Christ, he is the head, we are his members, flesh of his flesh, bone of his bone, we are members of him being joyned to him, and they that are joyned to the Lord are one Spirit, we are by faith joyned to the Lord, and Jesus Christ is said to dwell in us by faith; there is a nearer union that the believing soul hath with Jesus Christ, than any member hath to the natural body, than any branch hath to a natural tree, yea, than our souls and bodies have to each other,

John 6.56. He that eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. Now the nearer we be to a fountain, the nearer a ſupply, ſuppoſe one were in a fountain of water, he muſt needs have enough, ſuppoſe a man were in the body of the Sun, he muſt needs be ſupplied with light; Now the Soul that comes unto Chriſt, and is in Chriſt, it is in the fountain of living water, and being in the fountain, it muſt needs receive a full ſupply, unto all its wants, I ſay a very full ſupply. That is a ſecond Demonſtration.

3. *Thirdly*, To take up one more, I ſay we ſhall have a full ſupply, becauſe, *This ſame Fulneſs is communicated and given to Chriſt by the Father as Mediator, for this end and purpoſe, to give out and communicate to us.* For Brethren, this fulneſs that is in Chriſt is communicated unto Chriſt as the fulneſs of the God-head; for it ſeems to be an improper ſpeech to ſay that the Father is the fountain of the Deity, but the Father communicates to the Son in regard of the Perſonality, now Jeſus Chriſt hath all fulneſs as Mediator to communicate and give out, not to keep it to himſelf, and hold it to his own proper uſe only, But look now as it is with the Fountain, the Sea hath not its water for it ſelf, but to communicate unto rivers, ſo God hath made the Sun to be light, not to be light to it ſelf only, but to communicate and give light to the World: why now there is a full ſupply in Jeſus Chriſt, he being filled with all fulneſs, (from the Father) for this end, to give out to others, to communicate; *From his fulneſs we have all received Grace for Grace*, he is full of grace and truth, Ay, but

to

to what end is he full of grace and truth; that we might receive from his fulneſs grace for grace, and therefore ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *When he aſcended on high he led Captivity Captive, and received gifts for men, even for the rebellious,* He received them for men, for rebellious men, for enemies unto God, to give out and communicate of grace as he was Mediator, and therefore now Jeſus Chriſt gives out grace freely and largely, becauſe it is for that very end he had all fulneſs given to him, ſo that now there is a full ſupply to be had for all that come to Chriſt, Chriſt will fully ſupply all that come to him to drink of the water of life, and he hath never a whit the leſs: And O Brethren that you were fully perſwaded of this truth, that he is the fulneſs of all grace, that ſo we might know whether to go to be ſupplyed in all our ſpiritual wants, for we are ready to go to other things rather than to Chriſt, to our *Prayers*, and *Duties*, and the like, but theſe are to be uſed *only as Conduits, to convey ſuppply to us, but not as the ſupply*, but to look unto Chriſt who hath all ſupplies, that we may go unto him to ſupply us, who only is able to ſupply us, and fill us to the full with all grace, whatſoever we ſtand in need of, and then again, we ſhall not only have a full ſupply, but we ſhall have a ſupply freely, Chriſt will not ask any thing at all of any that comes to him, but they ſhall be ſupplyed freely from his fulneſs; as if you ſhould go to a fountain of water, and be filled, there's none will require or demand any thing of you, ſo the Sun it communicates it's light without money or without price, ſo it is here; when we are ſenſible of our own unworthi-

neſs,

neſs, and have nothing to carry, and nothing to give, no money, nor no price to carry in our hand, yet may we come to Chriſt, for he is a full fountain, and gives out the water of life freely. I ſhall demonſtrate that Jeſus Chriſt doth give out freely as well as fully, not only fully, but alſo freely, to all that do come unto him for this water of life, that ſo we may be eſtabliſhed in this truth.

1. Becauſe, *If it were not ſo, there's no creature, neither man nor woman, could ever come to drink of this water, if it were not free as well as full*, For no ſinful creature hath any thing to give, that is worth one drop of this water of life, it hath no ability to give any thing, and therefore if it were not free none ſhould partake of it; *Who hath firſt given unto the Lord, and it ſhall be recompenced him*? who? he means none, *For of him, and through him, and from him are all things, to whom be glory for ever.* And you have the Prophet *David* encouraging his people to be liberal in contributing towards the building of the Temple, and they were ſo, inſomuch as *Davids* heart was refreſhed therewithal, ſaith *David*, *All that we do give, or can communicate*, (though the people have given very liberally) yet ſaith he, *all is thine own*, All that Gold and Silver that we gave for the building of the Temple is all the Lords own, they had nothing of their own, it was the Lords. And ſo when the Lord gives out any ſpiritual good thing, why? what haſt thou to give unto the Lord? yea nothing at all, for what haſt thou that thou haſt not received? not the leaſt drop of good but it is from the Lord; if my life ſhould

ly

ly on it for a drop of living water to be fetcht in of my self, it could not be, or if it were to be had with a good wish, saith the Apostle, *I can neither do nor will any thing*, nay saith he, *I am not able to think a good thought*, therefore if my life did ly on it, for one good thought, I should not obtain it, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. *Not that we are sufficient of our selves, to think any thing as of our selves, but our sufficiency is of God.* Yea when we have done all that we are commanded to do or suffer, yet this will not purchase one drop of it, *Luke* 17. 10. So *Rom.* 8.18. *For I reckon, that the Sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.* And therefore I say, that it must needs be free, else never a man or woman could be able to partake of one draught or dramme of this water of life, if it were not free.

2. Again, *Because of that delight, pleasure, and complacency, that Jesus Christ doth take in giving out this water of life*, There is never an hungry man takes more delight in eating of his meat, than Jesus Christ doth in communicating of this water of life, an hungry man shall not need to be bidden to eat his meat, and saith Jesus Christ, *My meat is to do the will of him that sent me*, and so he invites all to come unto him; And you Women who know how to give suck to your little children, they being brought to you and making means; the mother having a full breast, shall she need to be hired to suckle her children? yea she is pained till she be delivered of her fulness, *Isa.* 66. 11 So 't is with Jesus Christ, he hath full breasts alwayes, and 'tis delighting to him to communicate.

Indeed

Indeed I told you before the Head is the fountain of the animal parts, and the head freely gives out to the ſenſes, and if there be an obſtruction to any of the reſt of the members, then it cauſes pain in the head: Why, Jeſus Chriſt he is the head of the body, and he doth as freely, and with as much deſire, and delight, and readineſs, communicate unto any of his members, even as the head is ready to communicate unto the body. And ſo you that keep ſhops, what keep you ſhop for? is it not that you deſire to part with your commodities freely for a price? and never any Shopkeeper is more free, and ready to part with any of his commodities for a price, than Jeſus Chriſt is to give out his water of life without price, I *counſel thee to come and buy of me, Rev.* 3.18. (to buy is to receive of him) *to come and buy wine and milk without money and without price, Iſa.* 55. 1. Again

3. *Becauſe of his free invitation to all comers to drink,* He comes among thouſands to proclaim this his readineſs, and freeneſs to give out of this water of life. Suppoſe you ſhould be at a dinner or ſupper at a Friends houſe, and being there ſhould offer for your dinner or ſupper, would not he take it as a diſparagement unto him: why ſo I ſay, if Jeſus Chriſt ſhould require any thing for what he gives out, as a price, and ſhould not give it out freely,, might not theſe many thouſands that heard of his kind proffer, cry out againſt him? why all thoſe Texts that you read of, wherein he invites poor ſinners to come unto him and that freely, if he were not now free to communicate, would not theſe words and ſcriptures witneſs againſt

againſt him? *O my people, teſtify againſt me,* ſaith the Lord in *Micah,* Jeſus Chriſt doth challenge any man to teſtify againſt him for his unfaithfulneſs towards him or them, and therefore hence it appears that Jeſus Chriſt is ready and free to give out a full and free ſupply unto all that come unto him, he will give out freely without money or without price. One thing more I ſhould have ſpoken to by way of Anſwer to an Objection, What? are all comers unto Chriſt to be ſupplied? why then, what's the reaſon that ſo many real believers make ſo many complaints, and are under ſuch great wants, they want this, and that, and the other, aud ſcarce any but want ſome meaſure or other, ſenſible of their own wants of this grace or the other, and I have ſuch a hard heart, and ſuch a dead heart, and ſuch a carnal heart, how then is it, that if all that do come unto Chriſt ſhall be ſupplyed, what mean theſe complaints? This I ſhould have ſpoken to, and the Application, but the time is ſpent.

Thirſty

Thirſty Sinners invited to Chriſt.

SERMON X.

JOHN 7. 37.

In the laſt day, that great day of the Feaſt, Jeſus ſtood, and cried, ſaying; If any man thirſt, let him come unto me and drink.

AS You have heard, you have here a gracious invitation that Jeſus Chriſt doth give unto poor ſinners that ſtand in need of the Water of Life; that ſtand in need of Eternal Life: He makes a loud Proclamation, *If any be a thirſt, let him come unto him.* And you have alſo a gracious Promiſe that is annexed unto this Invitation, *ſc. That they ſhall drink. If any man thirſt let him come unto me and drink.* You have heard the Point opened.

That any one, whoſoever he be, that comes in a thirſt to Chriſt, ſhall be made to drink abundantly, he ſhall have a full and a free ſupply of the Waters of Life.

Firſt, You have heard what we are to underſtand by this ſame thirſt. *If any man be a thirſt.*

Secondly,

Secondly, We have opened and shewn what is this same coming unto Christ.

And the last day, we came to speak of a *Third*, and that was to shew what Christ here means in this Promise, when he saith, *They shall drink. If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.* Ay drink, drink of the Water of Life, drink of whatsoever is necessary and good, or desirable for their everlasting salvation; That is meant by this same drinking of the Water of Life; Drink in of the Spirit and eternal blessedness, as you may see in the following words; *He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This he spake of the Spirit.*

Now in this Promise here wherein Christ saith, they shall drink; It implies and holds forth two things.

1. It holds forth a full supply, they shall have a full supply, not only a taste or a sip; but they shall drink and have a full draught; they shall have their bellys full.

2. It holds forth and implies, That he will let them have of the Water of Life, and not only so, but they shall have it freely, they shall have a full draught of the Water of Life, a full supply without any price or money; He requires nothing but only coming, if they come they shall have it.

Reasons 1.

Christ is a full Fountain, he hath all fulness in him, and fullness as a Fountain hath, and therefore can supply all Comers. There may be fullness of water in a Pail, but that will not supply all comers, but as he is the Fountain of the Springs, he

he can ſupply all comers, he is the fountain of all fulneſs, for all fulneſs is in him, and as he hath all fulneſs given unto him, ſo God the Father hath put all fulneſs into Chriſt the Mediator, to give out and communicate unto thoſe that come unto him for a ſupply, and he will do it, for he came from heaven to do his Fathers will, as Mediator, he is filled with all fulneſs, not for himſelf to keep it to himſelf, but it is put into him to that end, to communicate, derive, and give out; As the light of the Sun is not put into it, meerly that it ſhould keep it to it ſelf, but to communicate thereof unto all that ſhall come into the World; And ſo the Sea is the fulneſs of water, and that gives out of it ſelf freely, and the cauſe why the water is put into the Sea is, that it may fill the Rivers and Springs; And ſo it is with Chriſt, *It pleaſed the Father that in him we ſhould have all fulneſs, that ſo through his fulneſs we might receive grace for grace.* There is fulneſs of Wiſdom in Jeſus Chriſt, and fulneſs of Righteouſneſs, Holineſs, and Sanctification in him, God hath filled him with this fulneſs, and why ſo? as the Apoſtle tells us, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. to this end, to communicate, *He is made unto us of God*, or, *Who of God is made unto us Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption*: And ſo he hath made him to be thus unto us, that from his grace he might fill thoſe that come unto him. He is the fountain of life, and wherefore hath God put the fountain of life in Chriſt? what? to keep it to himſelf? no, but to communicate, *John* 10.10. *I am come*, ſaith Jeſus Chriſt, *that you might have life*, and that you might have it more abundantly,

more

more abundantly, than ever you had in all the time of the Law; the Son hath life in himself for this end and purpose, that he might give out life, not to have it to himself, and keep it to himself, but to give out as a fountain, and so, *John* 9. 39. It is said he is come for this end, *To give light to those who are blind, and that they that see not, might be made to see.* And then a

Reason 2.

Why it must needs be so, that they shall have a full supply, is, Because that those that come to Christ are very near unto him, united to him, and are in him, and so no condemnation to them that are in Christ; and therefore they must needs have a large supply and communication from Jesus Christ. Suppose that a man were in the Sun, the very fountain of light, if he be near the Sun he hath much light, but if he be in the Sun, then a more large fulness of light; and so they that come unto Christ, they are neer Christ, they are nigh unto him, *John* 6.56. *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him,* He abides in me, and dwells in me. The Soul therefore that comes to Christ, must needs have a full supply.

Again, This full supply that is given out unto Believers, it is given out not only fully but freely, Saith Christ, I do not ask any thing at all, but whosoever comes he shall have his fill, he shall have a full supply, and that freely, he shall drink and that freely, only do but come, and you shall drink, and thy soul shall live, *Revel.* 22.17. *And*

Whoſoever will let him come and drink of the water of life freely, And ſo *Iſa.* 55. 1. *Ho every one that thirſteth come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price*: Without any price at all, it is only coming, and that to every one that comes to him, it's moſt free. You have had two or three Demonſtrations, (I ſhall but briefly name them and ſo proceed) to ſhew and ſatisfy your hearts in this, that Jeſus Chriſt requireth nothing of any ſoul that comes to him, for the giving out of a large ſupply.

1. If Chriſt ſhould require any thing, and ſhould not give out freely, there is not a ſoul that ever was in the World, or ever ſhall be in the World, that had or hath wherewith to purchaſe any thing, or any one drop of the water of life: For we cannot as much as will, or think, or ſpeak of our ſelves, not ſo much as to have a good thought. And

2. Jeſus Chriſt will have it ſo, becauſe it is his pleaſure and delight.

3. It muſt needs be ſo, becauſe of that Invitation that Jeſus Chriſt doth here make unto poor ſouls that come unto him. Thus far I have proceeded. Before I come to the Application there is only one thing would be cleared as an Objection by the way, and that is taken from the Saints.

Objection.

Do we ſay there is ſuch a fulneſs in Jeſus Chriſt? and will he give out a large and full ſupply unto all that come to him, and that freely? How

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can this ſtand with the experience of them that are true believers that truly come unto Jeſus Chriſt? They are ſo ſenſible of their own wants, weakneſſes, and their own defects of grace, as what more frequent complaints? and who do more frequently complain than true believers? And there is never a true believing ſoul that comes to Jeſus Chriſt, but is ſenſible of ſome defect or want, or other, and hath not attained to perfection, and the more, and nearer he comes to Chriſt, ſtill the more ſenſible of his defects and wants: O! none ſo weak as I am, none ſo poor in grace as I am, none ſo weak in faith, ſo wanting in love, in humility, in patience, and in meekneſs as I, and O! none hath ſuch a cold heart, ſuch a dead heart, ſuch an unfruitful heart as I have: You will ſay, where is this ſame full ſupply then? Shall all that come to Chriſt have a full ſupply? how can theſe things be? What ſhall we ſay then? that thoſe that make ſuch complaints as theſe are not true believers? no, God forbid. Or ſhall we ſay that this Truth that Jeſus Chriſt hath ſpoken is not truth? why? where is then this ſame full ſupply? how can this ſtand to be a truth? that all that do come to Jeſus Chriſt ſhall have a full ſupply, and ſhall drink abundantly, and ſhall drink freely, when he ſaith, *Every one that cometh unto me ſhall drink of the water of life*, and that freely. Do not many believers fear that their ſins will be their ruine? and fear condemnation ſometimes? Now how doth this ſtand with this full ſupply, which is to be had in Chriſt? I ſhall clear this by anſwering to two or three things.

Anſwer 1.

Firſt. *Every believing ſoul that comes to Jeſus Chriſt hath drunk ſuch a draught of this ſame water of life, that he is freed for ever from condemnation,* He ſhall never dy, or periſh, or be condemned for ſin, no, he is freed from all condemnation, the pooreſt, the weakeſt, the meaneſt hath drunk a full ſupply, that it ſhall never periſh by its ſins, it is paſſed from death to life, there is no condemnation, none unto them (now) that they are in Chriſt Jeſus, no condemnation to the pooreſt and meaneſt believer, and now all their ſins are forgiven, there is a full forgiveneſs, thoſe ſins ſhall never be laid to their charge; And as the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, *I will be merciful unto their unrighteouſneſs, their ſins and their iniquities will I remember no more, And the blood of Jeſus Chriſt is able to cleanſe us from all our ſins.* It's true indeed, a believer that hath drunk of this ſame water of life, and that is freed from all his ſins, he may be poſſibly be exerciſed with fears, and poſſibly his Aſſurance, and his Apprehenſion of his Juſtification to himſelf may have ſome cloud upon it, he may be excerciſed with clouds, may fear his going down into the pit, though there is no real ground of it, for indeed he is freed from all the guilt of theſe, for he is now paſſed from death to life, *John* 11. 26. *He that believeth in me ſhall never dy,* that is, his very temporal death ſhall be but as a ſleep to him, the ſting is taken out, and he ſhall never die eternally. And ſo therefore to clear this Objection, there is never a believing

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ſoul that is come to Chriſt, but hath drunk ſuch a draught of the water of life, that he is paſſed from death to life, and ſhall never ſee death or condemnation. That is one.

Anſwer 2.

Secondly, *Every Soul that is come to Chriſt, (though in reſpect of his Sanctification, of ſanctifying and ſaving grace) he is not perfect, he hath not drunk ſuch a draught but he deſires more, and may deſire more, yet notwithſtanding, that draught that he hath drunk is ſuch a draught, as he ſhall never be thirſty more, ſo as to be wholly deſtitute of this ſame water of life, as he was before.* Chriſt ſaith, *John* 6.35. *He that cometh to me ſhall never hunger, he that believeth on me ſhall never thirſt*; He ſhall be carried on, as he ſhall never decreaſe, ſo as to be deſtitute, but ſhall grow up, as the grain of muſtard ſeed Chriſt makes uſe of by way of Parable, likening the Kingdom of Heaven to a grain of muſtard ſeed, and to a little Leaven which never leaves ſpreading, till it hath ſpread all over, and the grain of muſtard ſeed, it grows and ſprings up further and further, till it become a tree for the fowls in the air to lodge in; ſo our inward man is renewed day by day, as it will ſpring up, increaſe, and grow more and more, though yet he that hath drunk of the Spirit, hath not the full perfection of it at once, but may deſire more, yet notwithſtanding he hath ſo much as he ſhall never be dry again, that is, wholly deſtitute, but ſhall grow up, and increaſe and ſpring. And let me add only a third thing.

Anſwer 3.

You will ſay, The Saints have not a full draught and full ſupply, becauſe they complain, I anſwer, that though here they be in a ſtate of imperfection, and ſtand in need of a daily ſupply, (being ſenſible of their own defects and weakneſſes) *Yet every believing ſoul hath drunk ſo much of the water of life, as now he hath right and title unto the Inheritance of Glory*, where there is ſuch fulneſs of joy, as he ſhall be ſatisfied, and ſhall not be able to deſire any more, *Pſal.* 16. 11. *Thou wilt ſhew me the path of life, in thy preſence is fulneſs of Joy, and at thy right hand are pleaſures for evermore.* They ſhall have joy as much as they can hold, every veſſel ſhall be filled with glory ſo full as it can hold no more, they ſhall enjoy as much as ever they are able to hold or containe, every veſſel ſhall be full of glory. The beginnings of eternal life are here, and though poſſibly they may be made to drink tears here in abundance, yet notwithſtanding they have the beginnings of eternal life and glory, and when they come once to enjoy the conſummation of it, they ſhall not be able to deſire one draught, one jot more, ſo, *He that believeth on me, out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water, ſpringing up unto eternal life.* So much for that Objection. Now for the Application of the Point.

Uſe 1.

You ſee what Chriſt ſaith in the Text, *That man that comes unto me ſhall drink.* My drift in this

this Application shall be to press this Invitation of Jesus Christ. Be it known unto you Men and Women, young men and old and children, that are capable of knowledge, Know it, that Jesus Christ doth invite every one of you that stands before him in this Ordinance, to come unto him and draw water out of this Well of salvation. It is a strong invitation that whosoever comes to him shall drink of this water of life; Let me say unto you as *Moses* said unto the Children of Israel, *Deut.* 32. 46. *And he said unto them, Set your hearts unto all the Words that* I *testify among you this day,* Set your hearts to this Invitation of Jesus Christ, to the Word that is now sounding in your ears, for it is your life, Jesus Christ doth bring eternal life to your doors, to your hearts, do not look upon them as if they were words of course and wind, as if there were no truth or reality in them.

Brethren, I suppose now, if a friend should invite you to a Dinner or a Supper, you would believe that he were real, and you are ready to accept of his invitation, because you think he means, as he saith; Why so now, be it known unto you that Jesus Christ doth make an invitation to all here, every one in the Congregation this day, to come unto him, and you shall have a supply of this water of life. Suppose now, that Jesus Christ were here present speaking these words, as he did with his own mouth in the hearing of thousands, and suppose now, that if Jesus Christ were here in his bodily presence, do you not think you should believe? and give entertainment to what he spake? behold Jesus Christ now speaks in his

Word to all that are here present (as he spake to all that were present then) and makes proclamation, saying, Is any man athirst? is there any that do desire this water of life? that do desire to have their sins pardoned and forgiven them? that do desire to be freed from condemnation, that do desire to be adopted Sons and Daughters of God, to have peace with God, to have comfort and consolation in life and death, and to have everlasting, eternal glory, when life shall be no more? Know, Jesus Christ holds forth all this, whatsoever is requisite to eternal life, Jesus Christ doth invite you to this, and holds forth and promiseth to give a full draught of it to all that ever will come to him; Therefore let no poor soul lay impediments and blocks in its own way to hinder him from coming unto Jesus Christ.

Objection.

But may one say, I am afraid that I should presume, if I should come unto Christ, and therefore I dare not venture.

Answer.

O! let not any soul think so, nor say so to hinder any of your souls from coming, Know it, that if Jesus Christ had made no invitation to you to come, then you might very well say, it's presumption indeed for me to come, but Jesus Christ invites thee (himself) in his Word and Promises, that if you do come you shall have of this water of life, and that freely. Suppose a great rich man

man should invite a poor man to his Table, and he comes being invited, will ye say this is presumption, when he spake to him himself, and if he should not come, 'tis rather a slighting and despising his favour and love. Why Jesus Christ holds forth a free invitation, tenders it, and promises it to any one soul, that will come unto him upon his invitation, and therefore let nothing stave thee off, seeing he hath made a full and free invitation unto every one to come indeed.

Objection.

But alas! I do not know that I am invited! Christ invites me? what me? I am altogether unworthy to be invited to partake of this water of life, alas! so poor a creature, so ignorant, and so blind, and so without strength as I am? unable to perform any duty, no strength, and nothing at all to commend me unto the Lord, or why the Lord should give me the least drop of the water of life, and therefore certainly it is not to me, Jesus Christ doth not invite me.

Answer.

I say, Let not this Impediment ly in thy way, because we have no strength, or ability to do, or to please, or to serve him in any way, why, alas! do you think now that Jesus Christ calls for any price? invites people, and then they must bring money in their hands? No Brethren, you are much mistaken, Jesus Christ doth invite to come without money, or without any price: Who-

Whoever you be, though you be never ſo weak and unable to perform any duty, or ſervice, and never did any thing for the Lord, yet you ſhould come. And Brethren, the more unfit we are in our ſelves, and the leſs we have of our ſelves, and the more ſenſible we are of our own unfitneſs, this ſhould rather be ſo far from hindering, and diſcouraging us, as that it ſhould encourage us to come, why? becauſe that having nothing, and Chriſt being the fulneſs of all, we ſhould go unto Chriſt for all, as *Rev.* 3.18. ſaith Chriſt, *Thou art poor, and naked, blind, and miſerable, and haſt nothing, wherefore come to me, I counſel thee to come to me for Ey ſalve, and for rayment, gold, and treaſure, and riches,* — Why here now is Chriſts argument on the contrary, Why Brethren, he fills the hungry and the empty with good things, and they are to come to Chriſt. Jeſus Chriſt invites ſuch poor ſouls as have nothing at all, no ability at all, a poor blind creature, if one be more blind and unable, and more ignorant than another, here is the invitation, that Jeſus Chriſt doth make this day to ſuch a poor ſoul, that he ſhall, if he come, he ſhall drink, and he ſhall have of this Water of Life.

Objection.

But another Objection is, Alas! I am a poor old creature, an old man, or an old woman, that have lived without God, and without Chriſt all this time, and have ſlighted the offers of grace, and all the invitations of Chriſt in his Goſpel. And alſo a poor old ſinner, and will Jeſus Chriſt invite

invite me? I possibly have been a drunkard, and an old drunkard, and a swearer, and a blasphemer of the name of God, and the ways of Christ, and can I think that ever Christ should entertain me when I come?

Answer.

Why now mark what I say unto you in a word from the Lord; Let not any one here except himself, and exclude himself, if Jesus Christ do not except and exclude him; look into the invitation, doth Jesus Christ exclude, and say, Let every one come to me, except he be an old drunkard, or an old swearer? no, he doth not say so, he excludes none; See how the Words run, if any man will come he shall drink, if any man, without exception, can you have it spoken more full, or in plainer terms? *If any man will come unto me, he shall drink*, John 6.35,36,37. saith Jesus there, *I am the Bread of life, he that cometh unto me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst, but I said unto you, that ye also have seen me and believe not: All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out*, Let him be what he will, whatsoever he be; never such an old sinner, and therefore, why should a poor soul make this exception in his coming to Christ. Now, know it, if there be any such a soul in the Congregation, that hath lived so many years, and all his life long hath been in sinful courses, the invitation is to him, and to all others, that *If any come to me*, saith Christ, *I will give him the water of life.*

Objection

Objection.

But to object further, Alas! I have no ſtrength nor power, and I am unworthy to come, and therefore it is but a folly to make ſuch an invitation unto me, and I have no power.

Anſwer.

You have heard before what it is to come to Chriſt, *viz.* To venture, and caſt your ſelf upon Chriſts invitation in his promiſe, and the ſoul now venturing to lean upon Chriſts word, and to truſt Chriſt upon his word, and to expect what Chriſt holds forth in his word, this is a coming unto Chriſt, you know what the Prodigal was. and when the Lord ſees a poor ſoul afar off, he meets him, and ſtrengthens him, and encourageth him, and leadeth him by the hand, and upholdeth him.

Objection.

Ay, but you will ſay, Alas! I am willing to come to Chriſt, but I have no word, and a ſoul cannot come to Chriſt unleſs the Lord gives out ſome promiſe ſecretly to draw the heart to Chriſt, and I cannot remember that ever the Lord ſpake to me whereby I ſhould ever come.

Anſwer.

Well, ſuppoſe you cannot remember that ever

you

you had any word, or promise given out to draw or perswade your heart to cast it self, and to adventure upon Christ, yet behold! here is a word from the Lord this day, which he causes to be proclaimed in your hearing; Jesus Christ holds forth unto you this day, whoever you be that comes, he shall drink, and shall drink abundantly, and most freely, drink of the waters of life, and shall never perish, but shall live for ever, and therefore from this time forward, let not any soul say, well, the Lord hath not this day holden forth any word to me, know it, the Lord speaks to you, even to one and to another this day, *If any man be athirst, let him come unto me and drink.* Have you any thing more to object? think with your selves what it is?

Objection.

Ay, you will say, there is one thing more, and that is here in the Text, If any man be athirst, let him come, and I cannot say, I am athirst. There are two things in answer to this.

Answer 1.

The Promise that Christ makes here of giving the water of life, is not so much to the thirsty, as to the comer, Whoever he be that comes to me shall drink, 'tis true indeed he saith, every one that thirsts let him come to me and drink; Why ordinarily men and women, poor sinners are not ready to come to Christ, without they be made very thirsty, and see their necessity, ay, but notwithstanding

ſtanding ſaith Chriſt, If any man do but come (whoeuer he be) if he doth but come, and ſo, *Whoſoever will*, (whoſoever he be) *let him come and take of the water of life freely.* The Promiſe is made not to thirſters only, but to comers, and be ſure, if you come, he will give you to drink fully and freely, *Rev.* 22. 17. *And the Spirit and the Bride ſay, Come, and let him that heareth ſay, Come, and let him that is a thirſt come, and whoſoever will, let him come and drink of the water of life freely.* Remember, the Promiſe is not to the thirſty alone, but unto the comer, therefore venture to come, and you may be ſure Jeſus Chriſt will give you to drink of the water of life.

Anſwer 2.

But then again, you ſay, you do not thirſt, *Can any ſoul here before the Lord ſay, that you have no need of the water of life*, that you have no need of, nor deſire everlaſting life, that you have no need to have your ſins pardoned, is there any ſoul in the Congregation that can ſay, that there is no need, then you may ſtand off, and ſay there is no invitation made to me, but I dare ſay for every one in the congregation, that he would willingly dy the death of the righteous, and therefore, let every poor ſoul know whatſoever is ſpoken to one, is ſpoken to every one; Jeſus Chriſt hath made this invitation, if any man do but come to Chriſt, do but venture upon Chriſt, that is the way, he ſhall drink of the water of life; And what ſhall I ſay more for the clearing of this? do you not think that Jeſus Chriſt ſaith true?

or

or that he is to be believed in what he ſpeaks? never an one ſurely, but will ſay that Jeſus Chriſt is to be believed, and that they do believe that he ſpeaks truth, why, then Jeſus Chriſts invitation is to every one in this Congregation to come unto him, and therefore why ſhould any ſtand back, and hold off from coming unto Chriſt? If the Lord would perſwade your hearts to come unto Chriſt, it would be the happieſt day, that ever your eyes ſaw in this World, if the Lord would perſwade your hearts hereto, you ſhould find that Jeſus Chriſt would be as good as his word, that you ſhall drink of this water of life, and partake of it for ever and ever, and ſhall never ſee death, eternal death.

Objection.

There is one thing more, Poſſibly you will ſay I do not very well underſtand how I may come to Chriſt in a way of faith and believing, how or which way doth the ſoul come to Chriſt in a way of faith and believing? as that the ſoul ſhall certainly have of this water of life, and that Chriſt will give of this water of life.

Anſwer.

To open this a little. This ſame coming to Chriſt (I would ſpeak it as plainly as poſſibly I could, and not as a riddle, or fancy, or notion) 'Tis an hearkening to Chriſt in a Word of Promiſe, and the ſoul is therein to venture it ſelf, and rely on or upon him in that Word which he holds forth,

forth, and when the ſoul doth venture and cloſe with all, this is now a coming unto Chriſt; when the Lord gives out an invitation, a gracious Promiſe, which holds out mercy and eternal life, and in the hearing of it the Lord perſwades the ſoul of the truth and reality of it, it is perſwaded to truſt in it, to rely upon it, and to expect an accompliſhment and performance of it. And becauſe I would not ſpeak it as mine own words alone, I ſpeak it as the Virgin *Mary* did when the Angel came to her, *Luke* 1. 38. *Then ſaid Mary, Behold the Servant of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy Word*: This was now a believing, a truſting, and a relying on the Word of the Lord, ſhe was a Virgin, and the Angel anſwered her in that, as ſhe had no more to ſay, but to rely upon the Word of Promiſe, *Behold the Handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy Word*; whence was it? it was from this ſpeech, the holy confidence and expectation of the fulfilling of that promiſe to her. And ſo, effectual calling is an hearkening unto the Lords call, the ſoul being perſwaded to receive the Word, cloſing with, returning anſwer to the Word, then the ſoul is effectually called. So alſo there is an ineffectual Call, unto which the ſoul doth not anſwer, but looks upon the Word of the Lord by his Servants, as words of wind, and words of courſe, but as this ſame accepting of this gracious invitation, and promiſe which he holds forth, is effectual calling, why ſo, the neglecting of theſe, I ſay, is a refuſing to hear him that ſpeaks from Heaven. Take heed that you do not refuſe him that ſpeaks from Heaven, that is, now when the Lord

ſpeaks

ſpeaks in his invitation by gifts and outward calling; this invitation being propounded and made, and men make light of, it is an ineffectual calling; ſo now when upon the invitation of the call of the Lord in his promiſe, there is an yielding obedience unto that call in faith, it's called the obedience of Faith, *Rom.* 16. 26. When the ſoul doth yield unto the Lord in the voice of the Promiſe, cloſe withal, and receive and embrace it, looking upon it as worthy of all acceptation, receiving it with both hands, as it were; when the ſoul doth thus venture to rely upon the Word, venturing it ſelf upon the Lord in his Promiſe, that if I periſh, I will periſh there, I will venture my ſelf upon the Lords Word and Faithfulneſs. This is effectual Calling, 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. *I know*, ſaith *Paul*, *in whom I have believed, and I am perſwaded, that he will keep that good thing which I have committed unto him againſt that day*; I have committed my ſoul concernments unto him, and I truſt them in his armes. When the ſoul doth venture thus upon the gracious Word of invitation, doth receive it, and committeth it ſelf unto the Lord in it, this is a cloſing with Chriſt, and the anwer of the heart unto the Lords call, and this is a coming unto Chriſt. So that when you venture upon the Lord in his Word, you cloſe with him in it, it is ſoon ſaid, yea ſoon done, the ſoul may come, and cloſe with Chriſt in the Promiſe, and that ſoon too, ſo paſs from death unto life; Therefore ask your own hearts in the Preſence of the Lord, ſeeing Jeſus Chriſt doth make ſuch a gracious Invi-

tation for to come unto him, and venture upon him in his Word, whether it can be free and ready to ſay, now Lord let it be according to thy Word to me: ſay in this manner, as in the preſence of the Lord, Lord, upon this gracious invitation of thine in the Goſpel, I deſire to reſt and hope upon the faithfulneſs of thy Word, and to accept thereof, and truſt in it; Can you ſay it in the preſence of the Lord, you, whoſoever you are that ſeem to be afar off, though poſſibly you might have had ſome glimmering hopes, hoping ſometimes, that the Lord would be merciful to you, and preſently fearing your eternal condition. Well, I ſpeak it to you that are old men and women, and poſſibly old ſinners, that have lived in ſin all your lives long, and poſſibly are even hopeleſs in your ſelves, and ready to caſt out words of deſpair, and ſo in a hopeleſs condition in your ſelves, to you the Lord this day calls to come in unto him, and to hearken to this invitation, and if you now come unto him, you ſhall have of the water of life. And you young Men and Maids, (I would leave out none, who are capable of partaking of this water of life) conſider the Queſtion again, Are you willing to be ſaved? Let your hearts ſpeak it out between the Lord and your own ſouls, upon this Word of thy grace unto which thou haſt invited me, this gracious Promiſe, I do now commit my ſoul to thee, and rely upon this thy Word of Grace, and rely upon thy Faithfulneſs to accompliſh it to me; and have your ſouls thus anſwered unto the Lord? let it be unto me according

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to thy Word: let me ſay it in the name of the Lord unto you, This day is ſalvation come unto thy ſoul, this day hath Jeſus Chriſt given eternal life unto thy ſoul, this day the Lord hath taken thee into Covenant with himſelf, and hath vouchſafed thee to be his. And I ſpeak it in the authority which Jeſus Chriſt hath given me in his word, even every one that thus comes to Chriſt, accepting of this his gracious promiſe, I ſay it, thy ſins are forgiven thee, relying upon him in the Faithfulneſs of his Word, and Promiſe, I ſay, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath forgiven thy ſins, and you may go home, and record it for a Memorial, that this day, at ſuch a time, the Lord hath drawn out my ſoul, to make a cloſe with himſelf; and now eternal life is come unto thee, the Lord hath forgiven thy ſins, and now thou art paſſed from death to life. Let me make the offer again unto ſuch poor ſinners as have held out all this time, and have not laid hold upon this gracious invitation, made by Jeſus Chriſt, that will yet venture the Lord, perſwading your hearts, though poſſibly you have been enemies, and oppoſers, and poſſibly might come to oppoſe and catch, and though never ſo far off, and loſt in your ſelves, yet notwithſtanding hearken to this invitation, that if the Lord doth perſwade your hearts to ſay ſolemnly and ſeriouſly, Lord, upon this Word of thy gracious Promiſe and Invitation, I do now deſire to truſt and to venture upon thy Word, and do expect the performance and accompliſhment of thy Word,

that now it may be given out to thee, that so you also might be brought in unto Christ, to partake of this water of life.

Use 1.

A Word of Exhortation, to you who are come to Christ. *Go away now* (even as the Virgin *Mary*) *and say, My Soul doth magnifie the Lord, and my Spirit rejoyceth in God my Saviour, for he hath regarded the low Estate of his poor creature.*

It is said that the Eunuch went away rejoycing, after that *Philip* was caught away by the Spirit, and so hath every Believer cause to do.

Use 2.

Another Word is, *That you would go unto God with a holy boldness, as to your God and Father, for such special mercies, as you desire to have at the Lords hand.*

Now as the Holy Ghost saith, *Seek the Lord, while he may be found, and draw nigh unto him, while he is near.* The Lord is near to you, do do you draw neer to him with a humble and holy boldness, as to your God and Father, and you may ask what you will, and now beg that the Lord would establish his Work of Grace in your hearts, and now ask for this and that mercy, and for your relations, even what you will. In *Gen.* 17. *Abraham* falls down in a begging posture

posture (God having made a Covenant with him) *O Lord now that Ismael might live in thy sight*; so say I Go to God, and desire some special mercy this day, now while the Lord is nigh.

Use 3.

You who are brought near unto God, hath the Lord spoken to you? Take heed that you do not stop your ear unto what God speaks, and return again to folly.

Look that you do not walk as the Gentiles did, in the vanity of your minds, *Eph.* 4. 17. Now you must take heed that you do not walk in the same vanities, in your foolish pastimes, in your vain conversations, *take heed you do not walk after the course of the World*: If the Lord hath taken you out of the World, called you unto Christ, you are now to walk in a diligent performance of all duties unto the Lord, walk close with God in your particular Callings from the heart, take heed that you walk exactly, and inoffensively, keeping a good Conscience.

Use 4.

And lastly, *That still upon all occasions you would be coming to Christ.*

We are not to content our selves with once coming unto Christ, and there is an end, but we must come daily, even every day: When you find your hearts out of frame, when

when you are ſtraitned, and dead-hearted, come to Chriſt, even every day by vertue of this Promiſe, through this Word, leaning and reſting upon Chriſt, and O remember this bleſſed Word, this bleſſed Word of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, wherein he hath ſaid, *If any man thirſt, let him come unto me and drink.* ——

FINIS.